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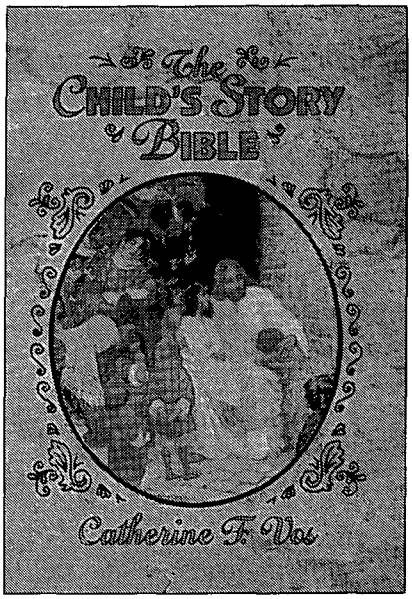

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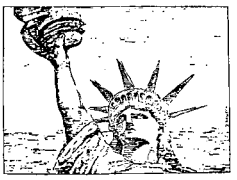

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MANAGING EDITOR
Katherine Dalton

SENIOR EDITOR, BOOKS
Chilton Williamson, Jr.

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ART DIRECTOR
Anna Mycek-Wodecki

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
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Odie Faulk, Jane Greer, John Shelton Reed, Gary Vasilash

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ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
Michael Warder

PUBLICATION DIRECTOR
Guy C. Reffett

COMPOSITION MANAGER
Anita Fedora

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Rochelle Frank

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On 'Beavers, Banners, and Bulls'

John Reed commented in his Letter from the Lower Right (December 1989) that, as he watched bulls in Spain "dispatched . . . with varying degrees of artistry," he found the "spectacle" to be "riveting," not "disturbing." His lack of discomfort at the sight of an animal being tormented and killed for entertainment says more about Mr. Reed's character than it does about bullfighting as a so-called "sport."

In Mexico in 1975, my wife and I made the mistake of attending a bullfight. It was one of the most repulsive sights I've had the misfortune to witness. The sight of the confused and uncomprehending bull, painfully goaded into an artificial aggressiveness, and then killed to the frenzied cheers of an audience composed of moral midgets, remains as sickening to me today as it was then.

John Henry Newman said that "cruelty to animals is as if we did not love God." I've been reading Mr. Reed's columns for some time now, and, when he writes on the subject, his sympathies are *never* with the animal. Mr. Reed may be incapable of summoning from within himself empathy for a suffering animal, but his writing for *Chronicles* would be easier to take if he tried to be a little less amusing on this subject and a little more thoughtful.

—Don Perkins
Mt. Clemens, MI

On 'The Ties That Bind'

Reading over my review of Allan Carlson's *Family Questions* (October 1989), I discovered an egregious error. The famous Dartmouth College case is 1819, not 1873. I must have been thinking of the Slaughterhouse case. Apologies to constitutional law fans everywhere!

—Jean Bethke Elshtain
Nashville, TN

On 'Reparations for Slavery'

In his September Cultural Revolutions piece, Don Feder discusses the proposal filed in the Massachusetts legislature requiring the state to pay reparations to the descendants of slaves. The idea of reparations for past US "sins" is gaining ground in other areas. In April 1988, the official periodical of the Methodist Church in Oregon and Idaho (the *United Methodist*) commissioned a guest editorial written by one Paul Jeffrey. Jeffrey cited all the past evils inflicted on the Nicaraguan people by the United States since the 1800's and called for billions of dollars in reparations: the payment, of course, to be handed over to the Sandinistas, the legitimate representatives of the Nicaraguan people!

Jeffrey is one of several "missionaries" supported by the Oregon Methodists who work in Central America as propagandists and intourist agents for the Sandinistas. He is staff editor of the *CEPAD Newsletter*, a document that never lacks for something anti-American to say. (CEPAD is a Nicaraguan Marxist-Protestant umbrella group; it has never criticized the Sandinistas for *anything*.) The newsletter is written and formatted in Nicaragua, but it is printed and distributed across the USA by the United Methodist Church in Oregon.

The strong leftist coterie that surrounds the bishop's office in Portland has helped pioneer a number of ideological issues that have become popular at the national level, both in the Church and in Congress. So, perhaps, if Feder has patience, he will see reparation payments to the Sandinistas moving into the big time, and joining Mass. Bill 1821 as another expensive loony tune.

—Dr. Alfred G. Ratz
Bend, OR

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THAT CONGRESS has never been held in greater contempt at any time in its two centuries is something all available evidence, whether statistical or impressionistic, indicates. When our noble Conscript Fathers, a few months back, undertook to promote themselves a little pay raise, public outrage achieved its greatest negative unanimity since the Japanese hit Pearl Harbor. The unmistakable expression of the people's will has not fazed the people's representatives in the least, and the pay raise is back again.

The same public that regards our representatives as little more than matter for cynical jokes regularly reelects them to their posts at a rate in excess of 90 percent, also a two-century record. If we were any longer able to be surprised, we would regard this as a very startling paradox. Some attention has been paid to the excessive incumbency problem, but not enough. Political operatives blame it on gerrymandering and the advantages of incumbency in name-recognition, etc. Ralph Nader, strangely, blames it on PACs, though PACs, indeed, are the only powers in the land with enough strength to challenge incumbency.

None of these explanations even begin to get at the question. The existence of either aspect of the current situation, not to mention the paradox, would have been *prima facie* evidence to our Founding Fathers of a grave crisis in republican government—of defects and perversions so fundamental in the people and the principles as to call into question the whole foundation of representative government.

Our present situation is, in fact, merely the result of long-term changes that have been accumulating for some time but that have only recently become apparent—changes that have altered the essence of our government from republican to imperial. In government we must look at the thing itself, not at the name. Nothing could be more delusive than to believe that dead names and forms preserve something when its living essence is gone.

Our Congress as it stands is purely and simply the natural and normal spawn of the Great Society. While we have not quite reached the Utopia promised by Lyndon Johnson, we have achieved an immense patronage machine that extends with a thousand arms into every congressional district and every community and almost into every home. The federal government is now a great giant who presents us with endless goodies, but who also demands steady tribute and who might carelessly roll over and crush us to death.

Our congressmen have simply adapted themselves to function in natural harmony with the Great Society—itself a perversion of representative democracy. They are its creatures. They are not lawmakers—they do not go to Washington to give the law to Leviathan. Rather, they are brokers, or at best ombudsmen, who are in a position to coax and coddle the giant into throwing some of his goodies our way. To put it another way, they are not primarily the representatives of our communities to the government, but primarily the delegates of the government to our communities. They work for the government and not for us.

Only a minimal amount of cunning is needed in a congressman to sit atop the flow of largess from Washington and take credit for it. He need only make sure that a sufficient number of citizens are paid off, in some way or another, to guarantee reelection to

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infinity. It does not matter whether the representative is a Democrat or a Republican, a liberal or a conservative, an abortionist or a pro-lifer, a rake, a pervert, a thief, or a drunk. All he has to do is make sure enough of us get our share of the gravy, that the balance of those who *think* they are getting something from the government is maintained over those who know they are getting shafted. Thanks to the diabolical system of withholding, this is made much easier. We do not blame our representatives for the tribute we pay, but thank them for what we get back.

The very meaning of representation has been transformed into something our forefathers would not have recognized by the term.

In order to understand why representative government has been altered beyond recognition, we have to understand what it meant to our fathers. The executive branch of the government, especially of the federal government, was regarded by most people, except the lucky few of placemen and monopolists, as a necessary evil. The purpose of representatives was to protect the communities which they represented from the depredations of the government. This is why revenue bills had to originate in the House of Commons and the House of Representatives.

It was understood that the main job of the representative was to protect and defend the community—to give the law to its potential oppressor, the government; to make sure the government's impositions on the community were really necessary for the general welfare and were confined in strict and lawful limits.

Two-year terms were a way of making the representatives refer back to their communities frequently so that they would not be seduced away by the payola and honors that it was in the power of the executive to confer. Turnover was also an affirmation of government of the people in another sense. The representative was temporary. He came from the ranks of the people and when his term was done there he returned, to live as an equal citizen under the benefits or the burdens of the laws he had made.

But one of the things that has happened in recent years is that congressmen have been insulated from the consequences of their acts. Whether from malice, from ignorance, from irresponsibility, from cowardice, or from some combination of these, they can decree for us war, taxation, inflation, crime, busing, abortion, and social decay, whatever they wish. They are largely immune—after all, the few who are unlucky enough to be turned out have their pensions, their appointments to the bench or the executive branch, nice jobs as lobbyists and "consultants," etc. etc. etc.

The traditional representative was not only a representative, he was also a leader. In the high original concept of Anglo-American democracy, the representative was not a machine who registered the preferences of 51 percent of his constituents. He was, rather, an exceptional person entrusted with a high responsibility, along with which went the scope to exercise his own wisdom and ethics in pursuit of the long-term best interests of the community. That is, he was expected to be not a mouthpiece but a statesman. Until this century, nearly all the great and admirable political figures in the British and American tradition were parliamentarians—not those who promised the people everything, but those who showed the people what was needed.

Needless to say, we do not find many statesmen of this sort in our Congress, which is as much a reflection on our virtue as on theirs. In order to have such representatives again we would have to elect people with intelligence and moral determination to consider the interests and welfare of society in a larger time-frame than the next election or the next brown bag full of money. And people with a higher conception of their duty than constituent service or following the recommendations of their pollsters and publicity agents.

There is, then, in the minds of our congressmen no reason why they should not receive a raise, whether we want them to have one or not. They are the brokers who handle an immense transfer of wealth from hand to hand—and brokers are always entitled to a handsome percentage of what they handle. They do not work for us. They are the servants of Leviathan, and it is Leviathan that rewards them.

—*Clyde Wilson*

THE INSTITUTE for Advanced Study, the research center in Princeton, New Jersey, was founded 60 years ago around the figure of Albert Einstein. When I was named member (1989-1990) the inestimable William Safire said to me, "Oh, Jack! That's where they send the geniuses!"

So strong is the presence of Einstein that people hereabouts readily forget you just can't institutionalize genius. Whatever their spiritual gifts, Franciscans, unlike St. Francis of Assisi, can't talk to birds—and when they try, the birds don't listen. So here, too, whatever their formidable pretentions and however great some of their predecessors, not many Institute professors are geniuses. But they all know how to act the part.

Judging from the two schools of IAS I know well, the School of Historical Studies and the School of Social Sciences, the staff is made up of people who range from above average but not mainstream (social sciences) to the quite good but not all that brilliant (historical studies).

All of them are presentable figures in their field. None could be regarded as an intellectual leader in his subject—no R.R. Palmer, no George Kennan, no Felix Gilbert (the Institute's class-acts now retired), no counterpart to a William MacNeil or a Eugene Genovese for instance—nobody brilliant, controversial, and agenda-setting.

But then, how much genius is there in any generation? And why must there always be a genius in every subfield of (for instance) history, for which an opening exists? And therein lies the lesson. Why think that the six fields of history IAS covers will have an Einstein ready for you the day that you need one? Chances are, you'll just get somebody competitive in the field as it is practiced that day, not the one who is shaping the field as it will be studied for a hundred years.

Why not institutionalize genius? Because it happens when and where it happens, this field today, another field twenty years from now. Genius is God's joke on the rest of us. IAS today is what happens when you don't believe in Grace: you believe, instead, in your own press notices. Fields of study are what they are, until some lonely, self-absorbed, stubborn narcissist persists and, by accident or sheer weight of

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intellect, wins the day and changes the world.

Take, for instance, geology—a field for students who were lazy jocks and dumb time-servers until, around thirty years ago, some wild genius discovered plate tectonics and made the theory stick. Now, if you're running "the place where they send the geniuses," as IAS thinks of itself, your job is to know that geology has a genius. So you go and try to bring that genius to IAS—but then you do not go on in geology, unless there is another revolutionary figure to appoint.

When the great moment of geology has run its course, with your open chair in geology, you have to identify not the next-best, or a distinguished, or the merely presentable (house-broken) geologist to succeed. You should try to learn what other field, that day, is exploding, and build there.

The alternative is to have a routine school of geology (or math, or historical studies), and then you're competing not with the ages but merely with other departments at other universities. So you get not geniuses—there may not be any to fill your slot in math or geology or history that day—but just another department. (Even if there are geniuses around, you may not want them because they don't bathe, and Princeton is a place where everybody is rich and smells good. Culture is, well, you know, *cultured*.)

And the geniuses you do get—not being self-absorbed men, who care mostly for what they're studying—are going to be awfully pleased with themselves, treading in the footsteps of the likes of Einstein, Von Neumann, and Oppenheimer. But Einstein didn't know he was Einstein. He was too busy thinking about whatever Einsteins think about. For the geniuses don't notice. Only the others do. Here, in general, they do. They really do: *Who Gets Einstein's Office* is the title of a book about the Institute.

If you want to see the long-term results of believing your own press notices, look at the library of IAS, which must be the most eccentric—the most pointless—public collection of books in the world. The Institute orders what the permanent staff wants, and since up the road there is Princeton University's library, with upwards of seven or eight million volumes, IAS really doesn't have to form a policy.

Consequently the acquisitions policy is pure caprice. I checked the IAS collection under the Library of Congress letters BM, which stand for Judaism, DS, Jewish history, and PJ, Hebrew and Aramaic. What shocked me is not what they don't have, since I expected little, but what they *do* have, which is, to put it charitably, mostly junk. I told the director that no small town synagogue library in Western Pennsylvania would want half the ephemera that IAS shelves under Judaism. My advice was, throw it out and start over. Fat chance.

What got me curious about the library was the rather odd selection of magazines for general reading in the Common Room. Being a denizen of the intellectual right, I went in search of my three favorite magazines, *National Review*, *Commentary*, and *Chronicles*. I even looked for some of their British counterparts. No such luck. The Common Room displays none of them (they do have the *Economist*), and the library periodicals room, only *Commentary*. I wrote to the librarian and offered to contribute subscriptions to all three for the Common Room.

He never answered. I didn't expect him to.

But then, either (a) I'm the genius, and you don't try to respond to a genius, you just smile benignly and do whatever he wants; or (b) he's the genius, and then he doesn't have to respond to anybody anyhow.

I don't think I am, and I don't think he is. But if I had to bet, I'd guess he would check box "b."

But, as Safire asked me, isn't this where they send the geniuses?

Sometimes. Sometimes not.

—*Jacob Neusner*

THE NEA is back to business-as-before—if anybody thought our elected representatives had any intention of listening to the will of voters, the recent NEA waffle and the newly revived congressional pay hike would squelch those fantasies. Under pleas from both parties not to make the pay hike a "partisan" issue, an increase for the folks who brought you the trillion-dollar deficit is back, and John E. Frohnmayer, the new chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, has shown his mettle first by caving into one, then to another party in Congress.

Initially the NEA was going to fund "Witness: Against Our Vanishing," an AIDS show at New York's Artists Space that includes "images of homosexual acts," as the papers put it. Then the NEA wasn't going to fund it, since the show might "offend the language" (that very watered-down language) of the 1990 Appropriations Act. The art community predictably exploded, and Mr. Frohnmayer immediately backed down, making (if I remember correctly) an unfortunate but all-too-apt comparison between himself and John Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis. In other words, when presented with Mapplethorpe II, the NEA did what is has always done: funded bad and politicized art.

The pertinent issue is what is properly the business of government, and both logically and constitutionally, the US government has no business funding traveling puppet theaters. The general welfare clause of Article I of the Constitution, under which the NEA was funded, was never intended to cover such an expense. The explicitly stated duties of Congress that follow that clause include the right to levy taxes and declare war; there is nothing about funding the Whitney or any passage that remotely points to such a thing.

My wish is for no NEA. I would, however, compromise. America has many artistic institutions of which it should be justifiably proud: declare them national treasures, then, and appropriate some money for their support. Fund the Metropolitan Museum, and the Chicago Symphony, and let the NEH continue to fund some historical papers projects for figures in American history in which the government can justifiably claim an interest. We will not all agree on the list, and it will be an elitist list, funding big, established institutions in the big cities, and probably more heavily weighted towards the East Coast, but then we are talking politics here and politics is never fair or close to perfect. At least in this the art community gets some money, and the taxpayers get some relief. Make these general support grants, and leave it at that.

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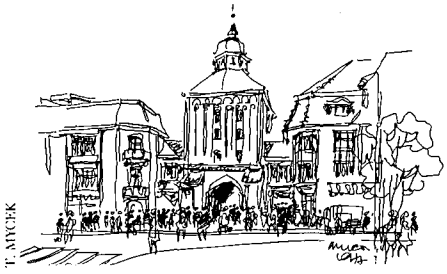
Unfortunately, such a compromise between the art community and the taxpayers may not be possible. Despite its bellyaching the NEA was not significantly chastised by Congress for funding Mapplethorpe and Serrano, and it is hard to believe that if such a public outcry could have no effect, another one will. In its 25-year history the NEA has always more than recovered from a budget cut, coming back a year



or two later with a big jump in funding. We can probably expect the same result from what was only a threatened budget cut, especially if President Bush reduces the defense budget as significantly as he has promised to. In that case we'll have all those loose billions that heaven forbid should be squandered on lowering the deficit—much less lowering taxes. The NEA's true reaction to Mapplethorpe may be more, bigger, and worse. (KD)

K-12 EDUCATION in America is, nationally, a disaster—that is something everyone seems to agree on. But on the local level, the parents of schoolchildren are hearing a different story. In a 1988 study an educational watchdog group called Friends for Education discovered that all of the 50 states were reporting that their elementary and secondary students were testing "above the national norm" in achievement. John Jacob Cannell, who heads this group, calls it the "Lake Wobegon effect," referring to Garrison Keillor's mythic town in which "all the men are strong, all the women are good-looking, and all the children are above average."

In a follow-up study conducted last spring, Cannell found that a major reason for those uniformly high test scores was cheating. In response to an ad Cannell placed in *Education Week*, he received a number of letters from teachers maintaining that cheating is common. And in those few states that do make an effort to investigate cheating, the number of incidences is shockingly high. California has found 50 schools cheating within the last three years. Chicago investigated 40 schools in 1985, 17 that were "above suspicion" as a control and 23 that were suspected. The testing officials there found that not only were 70 percent of the suspected schools cheating, but so were 12 percent of the control group.

Other indications of cheating are high elementary reading scores that mysteriously peter out as the student moves into secondary school, and states that rank low in national tests such as the ACT (administered with high security), but high in achievement tests (administered under the aegis of local superintendents with often little or no security). Cannell cites evidence that teachers are tailoring their curricula to fit the test questions, that teachers and administrators are teaching the test to their students, even that teachers are walking around during a test and indicating to students where an answer should be "doublechecked." What is more shocking is that in those states where cheating has been discovered, disciplinary action was either not taken at all or relatively mild.

Many of Cannell's proposed solutions are remarkably simple. He suggests that teachers should not test their own classes, for example, but switch with other teachers in their school, as testing their own classes gives them too great a personal interest in high test scores. He makes clear that it would not take an enormous amount of either effort or money to gather accurate test scores. What seems to be missing is the desire.

Unfortunately, as Cannell does not say explicitly in his report but as his evidence makes clear, what we have is the collusion of several parties, all anxious to hide the truth that Johnny can't read. For teachers and their unions, merit pay is often tied to test scores. Administrators are subject to de-funding from their state legislators and hostile local news reports if scores are low. And some publishers, out to make a buck, will not scruple to offer a district tests certain to raise their scores. The real push for a true indication of achievement is going to have to come from parents—for the simple reason that parents are the only group vitally interested in the education of children who will put the welfare of those children before their own. Eternal vigilance will always be the price of decent public education.

Copies of "How Public Educators Cheat on Standardized Tests" are available for $15.00, and "Nationally Normed Elementary Achievement Testing in America's Public Schools: How All Fifty States Are Above the National Average" for $10.00, from Friends for Education, 600 Girard Boulevard NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106. (KD)

BARRY SADLER, the Vietnam veteran who wrote and recorded "The Ballad of the Green Berets," died in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, last November 5. He was 49 years old. Sadler had been shot in the forehead in Guatemala City in September 1988, an incident that had left him brain damaged and partially paralyzed. The cause of death was not given, and an autopsy had been scheduled as of the time of this writing.

The circumstances of Sadler's shooting have given rise to speculation and rumor. Some say it was the result of a robbery; a few say he accidently shot himself while drunk; and others say it was tied to Sadler's involvement with gunrunning and the training of Nicaraguan rebels. What is confirmed by his friends, however, is that Sadler was a free-spirit whose actions and pursuits were as varied and unpredictable as they often were adventurous, violent, and dangerous.

Sadler was a combat medic with the United States Special Forces in Vietnam. He saw extensive combat throughout 1964 and 1965 and was wounded and returned stateside in 1966, the year he recorded his famous ballad. With America having "turned the corner" in Vietnam, and with the "light at the end of the tunnel" clearly in sight, Sadler's patriotic song rose to No. 1 and stayed there for five weeks. He was christened the poet laureate of the Vietnam War, and his hit single and album of army ballads sold more than nine million copies. He went to Hollywood in the late 1960's and acted in both movies and television, appearing in such series as *Death Valley Days* and *High Chaparral*, and went to

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Nashville in the 1970's to pursue a career in the music business, a world he later described as a "worse jungle than what I was in in Vietnam."

Sadler moved to Guatemala in the mid 1980's. Officially he was technical adviser to the Guatemalan Army, but his other pursuits were widely known. He was a fervent supporter of the Contra cause, and he relished training the Contras in combat techniques. He was also a lifelong mercenary who had doled himself out to eight or ten warring armies throughout the world; an international arms dealer who sold everything from Gatling guns to helicopters, which brought him big money as well as threats on his life; a hero and revered medic in Guatemalan villages who spent tens of thousands of dollars a year on medical supplies for the peasants, who in turn called him affectionately their "Papa Gringo"; and a notorious drinker and womanizer who loved to mix alcohol with the handling of loaded guns, who dubbed his Guatemalan house the Rancho Borracho (the ranch of drunkards), and who was incapable of divorcing himself from the barroom brawl. (He shot a man in the head during a bar fight in Nashville in 1978, for which he pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and drew a suspended sentence.)

Perhaps what is most astonishing about Sadler was his success as a writer. He was the author of more than 30 books, including the volumes that make up his semiautobiographical CASCA: *The Eternal Mercenary* series, which have sold more than two million copies. Sadler is known as the Louis L'Amour of the action adventure, and his books are among the best-sellers of the genre. Two additional books by Sadler, including the 22nd CASCA book, are scheduled to be released this spring. He was also a longtime contributor to *Soldier of Fortune*, and its publisher, Robert Brown, along with Sadler's friend Duke Faglier and literary agent Bob Robison, funded and arranged for the medics, brain surgeon, personnel, and planes that went to Sadler's aid in Guatemala in 1988.

Barry Sadler was the most famous and fabled soldier of the Vietnam War, and he died—fittingly enough—at the Alvin C. York Medical Center in Murfreesboro. (TP)

Principalities & Powers

by Samuel Francis

Economic globalism, beloved of many on the contemporary right, may be the major threat to the national and cultural identity of American civilization in the coming decades, but its logical counterpart is the political globalism, long beloved of the left, that marches under the banner of "one world." As the economic dependence of the United States on foreign trade, investment, and credit waxes, the political autonomy, legal sovereignty, and national independence of the country will wane. The architects of the new world order understand this, and they are quietly pushing a series of treaties, laws, and new international arrangements intended to diminish national independence and construct a transnational regime to which American laws, jurisdictions, and citizens will be subordinated.

The major achievement of political globalism in the United States in recent years has been the ratification of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the enactment of implementing legislation by the US Congress to bring federal law into conformity with the convention's terms. Largely forgotten until revived by Ronald Reagan on the eve of the 1984 presidential election, the genocide treaty originally provided for the trial and punishment of persons, including US citizens, who were accused and convicted of the crime of genocide. American citizens, that is, could be extradited to foreign countries to stand trial for a crime unknown to their own laws until the treaty created it. "Genocide" under the original language of the treaty was so broadly defined as to be absurd. Telling Polish jokes might have been construed as genocidal under its terms if they caused "serious mental harm" to sensitive Polish egos.

Mainly through the efforts of Senator Jesse Helms, the genocide treaty was amended and its most flagrant abuses neutralized before a Republican Senate adopted it. In 1988 the Congress passed legislation that put the treaty into effect and created the new crime of "genocide" for the first time under US law. Regardless of the changes the Senate approved, however, the principle of the treaty remains as obnoxious and harmful as ever, enacting the fundamental premise of political globalism that the domestic laws of a nation must yield to conventions passed by other states or by international organizations.

One of the major reasons there was any conservative opposition to the treaty at all was the concern about its effects on the state of Israel, which treats Palestinians in a way that might plausibly be interpreted as genocidal under the most generous reading of the definition contained in the treaty. I know of one conservative aide in the Senate who actually checked with the Israeli embassy to find out if it was all right for her and her principal to oppose the pact. Concern for the security of an ally is of course a legitimate reason to adopt or oppose a proposed act of statecraft, but it would have been refreshing if conservatives in the 1980's could have mustered similar solicitude for the fate of their own country.

Reliance on the treaty-making powers of the Constitution to change domestic laws is an old and favored trick of the one-world lobby, and it was to squelch such tricks forever that Senator John Bricker sponsored his famous Bricker Amendment in the 1950's. The measure would have restricted the treaty-making powers of the President and was a favorite hobbyhorse of conservative statesmen well into the 1960's. Unfortunately, they failed in their efforts, and today with Republicans and conservatives embracing virtually unrestricted presidential power in foreign policy, we may soon expect to see some of the worst nightmares of Senator Bricker and Robert A. Taft take flesh and come to life. The executive branch and its diplomatic bureaucracy in the State Department are already pushing several treaties that bind or alter US domestic laws—on labor relations, torture, human rights, and other subjects of intense emotional appeal and closely connected to the internal institutions

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and legal preferences of this or any other country.

But nothing offers more opportunities for one-worldist mischief than environmentalism. Since the "environment" extends across national borders, managing it cannot be restricted to a single state and has to be undertaken by several governments. The result of the "global environmental crises" now routinely discovered every year will be the regulation of the social, economic, and political life of particular nations in accordance with environmental rules promulgated (and presumably enforced) by a supranational authority.

Writing in the lead article of *Scientific American*'s September 1989 issue devoted to the topic of "Managing Planet Earth," William C. Clark of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government announced that one requirement for "adaptive planetary management" is:

> the construction of mechanisms at the national and international level to coordinate managerial activities. . . . In fact, a dozen or more global conventions for protection of the environment are now in effect. . . . [But] the immediate need at the international level is for a forum in which ministerial-level coordination of environmental-management activities can be regularly discussed and implemented, much as is already done for international economic policy.

The kind of transnational management of the natural environment that Mr. Clark advocates would indeed complement the similar arrangements already in place for global economic management. As libertarian scholar Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr. recently pointed out, "Under the aegis of the Bank for International Settlements . . . banking is now regulated on a global basis. And the Bush administration is pushing for world regulation of the stock, bond, and futures markets. The administration is also promoting—with the other G-7 industrialized nations—international cash controls, international financial police, international tax collusion, international fiscal controls, and a UN treaty to make confidential banking a crime."

If global management of the environment doesn't polish off the nation-state, managing the global economy certainly will. *The New Republic* senior editor Robert Wright, in a recent essay in explicit defense of one-worldism, argues that global economic interdependence and the resulting "policy coordination" are pressures for the kind of "institutional subordination of national autonomy to international will" that he envisions for the planet of the future. "As the leaky national economy becomes hostage to international forces," he writes, "we can either seize control of these forces in concert with other nations; or surrender a good measure of control altogether."

The obvious but seldom-asked question, of course, is: who is "we"? Those who will gain from the evanescence of the nation-state and of the concept of nationality itself will be those elites able to preserve and enhance their own power in the new, denationalized order that the globalists anticipate—those who will be managing the environment, planning and running the world economy, and enacting, administering, or enforcing the transnational laws and treaties by which the planetary regime is to be governed and the human proclivity to differentiate into distinct groups restrained. The cultures, religions, languages, and nations from which this elite emerges will be largely irrelevant to its powers and interests. They will in fact present an obstacle to the furtherance of its powers and interests and will therefore need to be reduced or eliminated entirely if the emergent transnational managerial elite is to flourish. The elite may retain some quaint vestiges of nationalism, just as we today conserve places like Williamsburg, and it may even find nationalist imagery useful in gaining the confidence of patriotic types who fail to see the glories of the new age. But whatever the merits of the globalist argument that the world had just better get itself together or else face disaster, the logic of the new elite's interests will increasingly ensure that nationality—and the legal and political claims and cultural identities that go with nationality—is extinguished and its own global technocratic regime perpetuated.

Americans, who began their national history by severing the bonds that connected them to a dying civilization and who ventured into history determined to build a new civilization politically independent of and culturally unique among the powers of the earth, will find themselves reduced in both power and identity by the emergent world order that both the "right" and the "left" today like to celebrate. They will eventually find themselves delivered back to the mercies of whatever glorified pencil-sharpeners from Europe or the Third World happen to be in charge of their future this year, and they may become indistinguishable from the rest of the cattle in the global barnyard who provide the fluctuating, mobile populations of the planetary economy and government. Americans who don't want to become such cosmopolitan coolies need to start thinking about what they can do to preserve their nation, its heritage, and themselves from the managerial colossus that now begins to straddle the globe.

LIBERAL ARTS

AT LEAST IT WASN'T NEA-FUNDED

Carhenge, Nebraska's curious automotive clone of Stonehenge, appears safe from bureaucratic bulldozers. A truly out-of-the-way sculpture fashioned from junk cars by a hometown artist, Carhenge had been threatened with demolition after displeased neighbors in Alliance (pop., 9,800) seized upon a code violation—it lacked a paved access road. Carhenge supporters, citing the conspicuous absence of a Mt. Rushmore to attract tourists, argued that a scrapheap sculpture is a suitable alternative, even if it's just 16 junk cars stuck trunk-side down in the prairie, with six more clunkers plopped atop them as an ironic tribute to prehistoric Stonehenge. And it looks like they've won. Last November a group called Friends of Carhenge drove to the rescue of artist James Reinders with $2,000 in asphalt money. Carhenge will remain.

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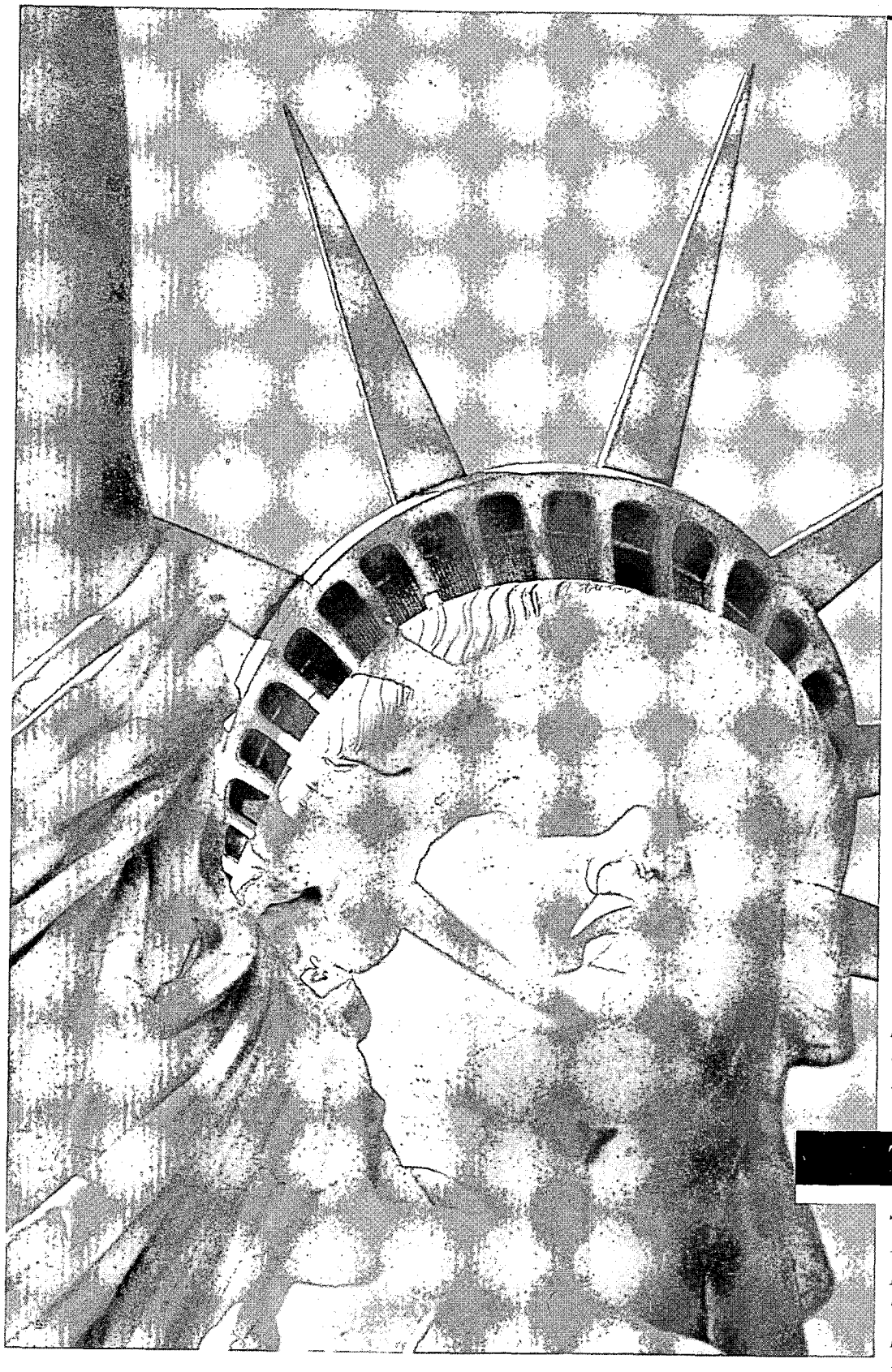

Around the world, there is much talk of peace and that is good. Yet we should remember, as President Reagan said, "Peace isn't simply an absence of war, but a presence of justice." Tyranny, in all its forms, corrupts justice and stifles the human spirit. We must never forget this truth. Our immigrants won't. They know that Americanism is more than love of country; it is love of principles, principles which can change the world. And will.

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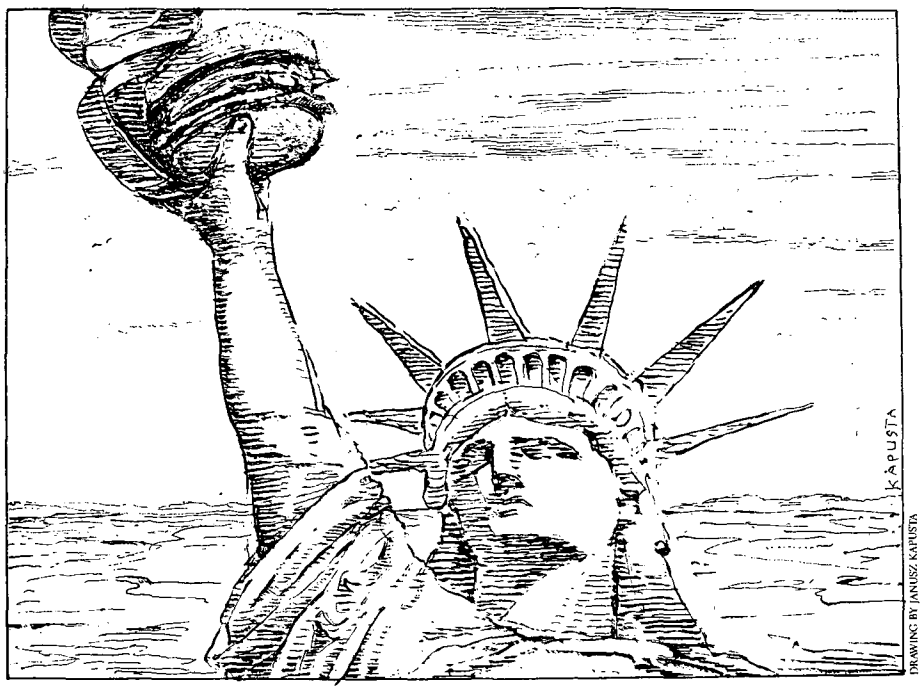

Peace on Earth Among Men of Good Will

by Thomas Fleming

The dilapidation of the Soviet Empire at the end of 1989 became the minor premise of the argument that man's dreams of peace and global unity are finally about to be realized at the end of the second millennium. The peaceful crusade of East Germans across the border has convinced otherwise sober men that democracy's star is in the ascendant. George Will made the point in one of his Sunday morning lectures to David Brinkley and Sam Donaldson: the third President of the United States is the dominant man in Europe.

One wishes the Germans, East and West, nothing but good, but the complaints most frequently heard on the refugees' lips had little to do with the principles of representative government and a great deal to do with the shoddy goods and low standard of living in the East. As they came streaming back from a day in West Berlin, it was not copies of the *Declaration of Independence* or any other forbidden political or religious tract they were carrying, but tape decks, T-shirts, radios, and stuffed animals. They looked less like democratic revolutionaries than like K-Mart shoppers who had just blown their welfare checks on cheap Japanese electronics.

The news commentators all spoke of a new day dawning in history, and only a few were honest enough to point out that the real political drama being played out was a contest of wills between the old hard-line Communists, led by Erik Honecker, and the most powerful Communist czar since Stalin. As if to rub in the message, Soviet spokesmen declared that the East German government was paying the price for its intransigence and threatened other hard-liners (e.g., in Rumania) with a similar fate. It is a brilliant, if dangerous strategy for Gorbachev, and one that could plunge Europe into spasms of ethnic conflict as each little nation and national fragment begins demanding its rights, but so far the net effects are a qualified positive good for everyone. At the best, it probably means Poland and East Germany will go the way of Sweden—social democracies addicted to consumerism and impersonal sex. At the worst, it means World War III.

However things turn out, there is as much cause for doubt as for rejoicing. After five years of *glasnost*, the Soviets are only beginning to trim their ruinously high military expenditures. Meanwhile, they continue to ship arms into Afghanistan, Africa, and Central America. At the same time the USSR and its allies are negotiating trade credits, loans, and other economic privileges from the West that will help them to escape from the consequences of their vice and folly. A cynic might suppose that this is the real point of Gorbachev's reforms: a chance simultaneously to cut defense costs and attract Western capital, without abating his global strategy of aggression.

Whatever the facts on the case may be, the United States would be ill-advised to rush in blindly. Politics is always a matter of risks and benefits to be calculated according to the rules of prudence, and Secretary Baker—to almost everyone's surprise—has so far done a credible job of

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navigating through dangerous waters. But to listen to Mr. Will or read the nation's leading editorialists is like listening to a Pentacostalist preacher raving about the last days in the unknown tongue. The occasion serves to remind us, if we could ever forget, that, whether they choose to call themselves liberals or conservatives, our intellectual and cultural leaders are only the most recent heirs of America's progressive tradition. At one time or another the progressives have marched under the name of Unitarians, Universalists, Oneida free-love colonists, Social Gospelers, New Dealers, New Leftists, and One Worlders. Ever since the New England Puritans mistook the Indians for devils with whom they had to struggle for the soul of the continent, American visionaries have been busily at work building their city on a hill. Unfortunately, the city turns out to resemble Detroit more than Jerusalem.

The manifest decline in all the standards of our civilization, however, has not dimmed the enthusiasm of the progessives, who see the dawning of a new age through the holes punched into the Berlin Wall. Recently, *The New Republic* did a retrospective issue on their 75 years of history, and except for the deterioration in the prose, it was hard to distinguish the current crusaders for democracy from the first generation of draft-evading militarists — including, of course, Walter Lippman — from their current avatars. Only Henry Fairlie, God bless him, was honest enough (or learned enough) to expose the dangerous role played by that magazine in promoting American entry into World War I.

But the years surrounding every turn of century bring the cultists out of the woodwork. It is as if the script for American intellectual history had been written by H.P. Lovecraft on a bad day. Many of Lovecraft's best tales concern the "Old Ones" who, as he informs us in *At the Mountains of Madness*, "filtered down from the stars and concocted earth life as a joke or mistake." If the correct ritual is performed according to the dictates of the *Necronomicon*, the Old Ones can be summoned back into this dimension, and a New Age — of wonder or terror — will begin. Lovecraft seemed almost to believe his fantasies, but in lunacy he was exceeded by any number of political dreamers, each sect with its own version of the *Necronomicon*: *Le Contrat Social*, *Das Kapital*, *On Liberty*, *Progress and Poverty*. With the secrets contained in any of these books, man will be able to slip free from the shackles of history and enter the Golden Age.

This means, of course, "The End of History," the title of Francis Fukuyama's now-celebrated article. Fukuyama probably did not mean us to take his piece seriously — Americans had better pray it is only a joke, that the US Department of State does not really give refuge to academic millenarians. But even if he and the editors of *The National Interest* were only kidding, the response has been disturbing. The best observation on Fukuyama's manufactured celebrity (so reminiscent of the instant success of Allan Bloom) was provided by *Harper's* editor Lewis Lapham, who connected it with another fatuous prophecy, *The End of Nature*. These fantasies, suggests Lapham, are the inevitable spray cast up by the rapidly approaching millennium. We're in for a boring decade, if pundits and reviewers will be compelled to devote the next ten years to the end of sex, the end of the family, the end of time, and — of course — the end of ends.

The serious attention that has been paid to Fukuyama is good evidence that Americana visionaries have a new sacred text to replace their battered and blood-stained copies of Marx: Kant's essay "On Perpetual Peace," a tract on peace and world government that antedates even the founding of *The New Republic*. It is significant, however, that the revival of such aspirations coincides with the turn of the last century. (The 1780's and 90's were also vintage years for imperialism in the guise of global democracy.) It is odd, really, how similar the 1880's are to the 1980's: both periods were plagued by sex and health cults, crafts and hobbies movements, pseudo-Oriental religious crazes involving crystals, pyramids, and eccentric dress, and out-and-out black magicians, like Aleister Crowley (b. 1875), who would find himself very much at home today.

In many ways the archetypal turn of the century figure was H.G. Wells, who at one time or another embraced nearly every heresy of progress that was to disturb the 20th century: socialism, free love, the emancipation of women, and a utopian future in which science served the universal brotherhood of man. In the Nicholas Meyer film, *Time After Time*, Jack the Ripper steals H.G. Wells' time machine and escapes from the London police into 1979. When Wells follows him and explains that they don't belong in the future, the Ripper turns on the television and creates a collage of violence by flipping from the news to the NFL to cartoons. "Not belong here?" he asks.

> On the contrary, I belong here completely and utterly. I'm home. It's you who do not belong here, you with your absurd notions of a perfect and harmonious society. . . . The world has caught up with me and surpassed me. Ninety years ago I was a freak. Today, I'm an amateur.

The turn of the century was home to more than serial killers, utopians, and magicians; it was also the period that witnessed the struggle between rival millennialisms among American Protestants. The dominant creed, post-millennialism, was and is the American civil religion. In the American post-millennialist vision, which goes back at least as far as Jonathan Edwards, Christianity and social reform will eventually make this world so pleasant a place in which to live that the Lord will step in and say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." It was the perfect religious doctrine for a people that did not wish to be encumbered by orthodoxy or tradition in their pursuit of earthly perfection, and down almost to the First World War, the post-millennialist social gospel, the legacy of liberalized Puritanism, was the dominant eschatology of the American seminaries and churches. In its secular form, it is the religion of progressive liberalism, and its prophets are Herbert Croly, Walter Lippman, and Woodrow Wilson.

Pre-millennialists, however, are made of sterner stuff. In their vision of the future, mankind must go through a period of tribulation before the Second Coming. The first sect of pre-millennialist dervishes to sweep through the Northeast were the Millerites (now Seventh-Day Adventists) who confidently predicted the Second Coming in 1843. The disappointment and ridicule that attended the Messiah's

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No-Show might have been expected to put down all pre-millennialist heresy for good. However, another, more intellectual strain was imported from England in a form (dispensationalism) that appealed powerfully to conservative evangelicals who were offended by the liberal habit of equating God's will with their own peculiar schemes of social reform.

The post-millennialists had—and continue to have—the intellectuals, while the pre-millennialists possess the hearts and minds of the most fervent Protestants in America. To a great extent, the real conflict in American life today is not between liberals and conservatives (much less between Communists and ex-Communists) but between two rival millennialisms: between a secular creed that puts its faith in technology, progress, and democracy; and the hardshell conviction that man, left to his own devices (which include democratic capitalism), will worship the anti-Christ. The middle way pursued by catholics (i.e. Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Anglicans, Lutherans, and even Calvinists), who do not spend their lives in some impossible future, has little hold on the public imagination.

Although the mainstream of Christian thought has been resolutely "amillennialist," Christians have always found it hard to resist the temptation to construct the Kingdom of God in the here and now. Every December we are treated to Christmas cards from United Nations agencies that proclaim, in the words of the heavenly host: "Peace on Earth, Good will toward men."

◆

To a great extent, the real conflict in American life today is between two rival millennialisms.

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It was from scriptural passages like this that such varied writers as the gentle Origen and the Leveller William Walwyn conceived their ideas of universal salvation. (In Origen's heresy even Satan is eventually reconciled to God.) For more vindictive temperaments, however, it has never seemed right to extend the promise of a harmonious world order to all mankind, regardless of character or behavior. There are men and women who, day by day, add bricks and mortar to the walls of Hell, and it seems a shame that they should never be allowed to stoke its fires.

In this passage (Luke II.14), at least, the vision of universal peace rests upon a probably faulty text, since the best manuscript authorities read: "Peace on earth among men of *eudokia*"—a word which might mean either good will or good repute. On either interpretation of the word, peace on earth is restricted to those whose faith and conduct reveal the operation of grace within their hearts.

It is a small thing, perhaps, a difference between a genitive and a nominative case in a Greek text, but the interpretation raises ethical and political questions that continue to plague the human race. The different readings lead to two quite distinct visions of human life, and not just in relation to salvation. For if the harsher interpretation seems to restrict salvation to men of good will or to men who have found favor in the eyes of God, it also implies a view of human social life in which the good are forever compelled to struggle with evil, and the sheep are forever being butted by the goats.

The more prevalent philosophical view of the past few centuries has been the charitable conviction that men and nations are essentially good, and that once they are liberated from the fetters of superstition, tradition, and oppressive political order, men will unite into one happy family governed by the popular will. In one form or another, it was the dream of Robespierre and Napoleon, of Marx and Lenin, and of Adolph Hitler, who once confided to Hermann Rauschning that national states had outlived their usefulness. The time had come, he said, for world government.

Today, the specific form this delusion takes, at least in public, is democratic globalism. But no one above the age of 25 can seriously believe that the world will ever be governed, in whole or in part, on democratic principles. Democracy can work in a church congregation, certainly, and in a small town, yes, and in a rural state, perhaps, but not in the city of New York or the state of California, much less the United States. Most of these political entities, I think we all understand, are governed by the machinery of cabals and interest groups. Their family feuds may sometimes give the impression of democracy, but then even the most rigid oligarchies sometimes succumb to partisan struggles. Hitler had to eliminate Ernst Röhm and the SA; Stalin purged the Trotskyists, Bukharinists, and—incidentally—the Jews from the Communist Party.

In America, however, our own party state—the tool of government contractors, unionized government employees, and minority interest groups—can deal more successfully with each competing claim by buying them all off with tax dollars. As for the limited government that depended upon a responsible citizenry of farmers and tradesmen who knew how to mind their own business—what we used to call democracy in the days of Jefferson, Jackson, and Bryan—there is hardly a trace to be found, except in remote areas that have kept themselves relatively free from the infection of federal funds.

If the current dream of world unity and the end of history has little or nothing to do with democracy, then what precisely is the meaning of all this talk of global democracy? Conservatives do not know what to make of it, because ideology—especially a global ideology—is foreign to their nature, but leftists, who have been putting up with this New Republican silliness for some time, know a scam when they see one. John Judis, writing recently in *In These Times*, came close to endorsing the old conservative isolationism that is enjoying a modest revival these days, but the best comment was made by Erwin Knoll, the genial editor of the far-left *Progressive*, who frequently hears complaints that his magazine does not appear to support world government. Knoll's answer, he told me, was always the same: if they think the government of the United States is a repressive tyranny, what do they think these people will do when they run the whole world, without any fear of competition? And if you can answer that question, you are ready to face the millennium.

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Scene From Childhood

by Robert B. Shaw

There was a farmer pushing a plow
over and over, around four walls.
Between each sight of him and the next
were tufts of flowers, a curious crop.
For the first seven years of her life
she found him working when she woke up.

He was in profile, hat pulled down,
face hardly showing, bent to his job.
His horse looked happier, stepping high
as if the field were no great chore.
His shirt was red, his pants were blue.
(The prancing horse and the flowers were too.)

When they ordered her up on hot afternoons
to (ugh) take a nap she would try to count
just how many times the man and his horse
were going over the same old ground.
She always fell asleep, of course,
before she got even halfway around.

They held to the same deliberate pace
except for once, when measles kept her
up in her bed, with her fever up,
and then the figures seemed to race;
not even the flowers stayed in place.
They fluttered and sighed in a parching wind.

When she got better the walls stood still.
It would have been when she was six or so.
They moved next year to another state,
leaving the farmer still in full stride,
horse high-stepping, flowers in bloom,
doing their best in an empty room.

For some new child moved in to stay
would all their labor exert such charm?
Would they go limp without her watching,
loaf in the shade and leave the farm
to weeds and weasels? She wondered, watching
farms whipping by on the white highway,
finding no answer for how many years
till now, when a harness jingle, a heavy
share ripping dirt have startled her ears.
Still in mid-furrow as she wakes up . . .
But nothing is there. Her walls are white.
They call it a day at the end of the night.

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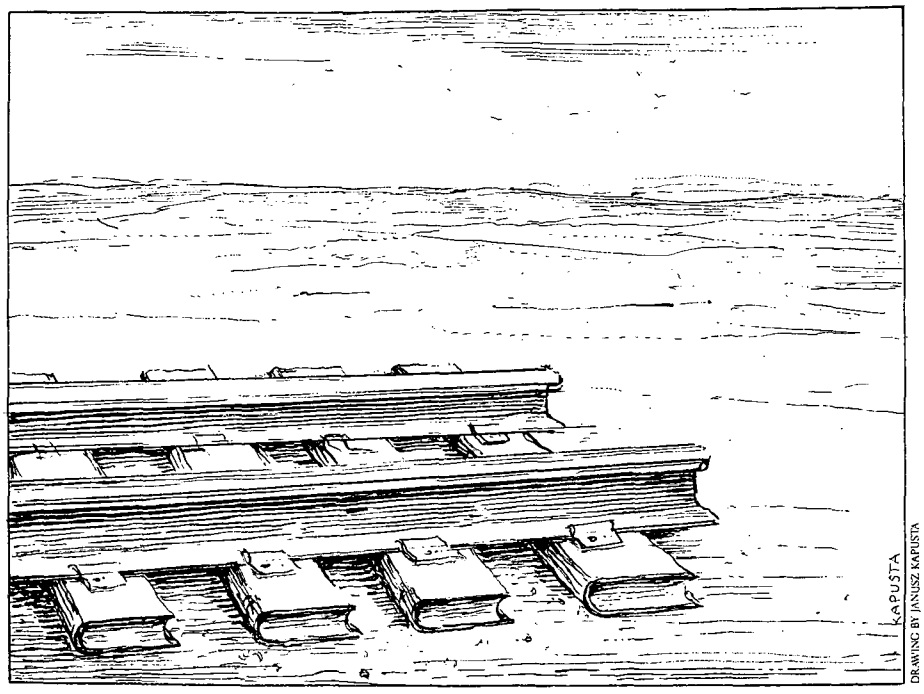
Quis Judicabit?

by Paul Gottfried



The discussion of "the end of history" by Francis Fukuyama in *The National Interest* (Summer 1989) has led to comment by numerous publicists. Among others Charles Krauthammer, George Will, Richard Bernstein, and a feature writer for *Time* have evaluated Fukuyama's hypothetical arguments that the world may be moving toward a democratic capitalist final age: a world without war and therefore without serious politics, in which boredom, not strife, will be the major human problem.

In Fukuyama's defense it should be noted that he does not advocate that steps be taken to turn utopia into reality; nor does he express unqualified enthusiasm for what he treats as a merely *possible* future. However, he does make the mistake of identifying his vision with the philosopher Hegel, who, as it happened, supported nation-states as an antidemocratic constitutionalist. Hegel devoted one of his last tracts to attacking the Reform Bill then being considered in England and finally enacted in 1832. The reconstruction of the English electoral districts in the direction of proportionate democratic representation, Hegel maintained, would involve an ill-advised move toward popular government. Ironically, George Will, who seems to have learned his Hegel from Fukuyama, praises the philosopher as a "good German," that is, a democrat, but scoffs at his simpleminded faith in the possibility of world government. Actually, Hegel looked forward to neither democracy nor world government.

The Russian-French "Hegelian," Alexandre Kojeve, also mentioned by Fukuyama, claimed to believe in both. Kojeve reinterpreted Hegel as the philosopher of "world reason" whose ideas pointed toward a world state. But Kojeve also believed that more than ideas would be necessary to introduce a cosmic order from which master-slave relationships would be forever abolished. He glorified the French Revolution, including the Reign of Terror. And while Kojeve worked for the European Common Market as an instrument of interstate cooperation, he also admired Joseph Stalin, as a practitioner of the politics of world unity. This unabashed Stalinophile, not Hegel, stressed the theme of a world without politics that Fukuyama serves up (with some capitalist modifications) in his essay.

Other pointed criticisms of the article have come forth from discerning readers. For example, John Gray in *National Review* (October 27, 1989) observes that the alleged democratic ascendancy in Eastern Europe to which Fukuyama refers has little to do with democracy. What has happened is the reappearance of national societies that foreign Communist domination had driven underground. The rhetoric of democracy is being used by some Eastern Europeans and even more by Western journalists to describe the frantic attempts made by nations to regain control of their own destinies. Herbert London in *The London Letter* (July/August 1989) sees Fukuyama's dream as the last of a long series of interesting but empty visions. It shares a family resemblance to other nonstarters like Woodrow Wilson's "ineluctable worldwide victory for democracy" and the appeal by Kant to a worldwide republic of rational beings who would outlaw war. London rightly notes that visionary reformers have long been predicting the end of history while identifying that end with the triumph of their own ideas. Though Fukuyama is more clever about packaging his vision, he, too, is bestowing inevitability on what is a personal dream.

He is also presenting the world view of at least some of

Paul Gottfried is a professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania.

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the editors of *The National Interest*. Though neoconservatives have managed to put together a debate on the issues raised by Fukuyama, they generally agree with his view of where things are drifting. Krauthammer, Will, Wattenberg, and other neoconservatives may not like the dogmatic tone and the references to a problem-free world, but they share his progressive vision. They too envisage a uniformly democratic earth without national barriers and with just enough capitalism to provide for general prosperity. People may continue to be quarrelsome, but Krauthammer is sure that we know "politically" what is best for everyone: a democratic polity with a mixed economy. Still, Krauthammer is prepared to allow history to take its own course, unlike Kojeve. In published exchanges with Leo Strauss, Kojeve calls for a world state established, if necessary, by a "tyrant" who would end our struggle for domination over each other.

In his essay Fukuyama posits an indissoluble relationship between politics and conflict in the modern era. His remarks might indicate a familiarity with the German legal theorist Carl Schmitt (1888-1985), on whom I have published several articles. In a provocative polemic of 1927, "The Concept of the Political," Schmitt speaks of intense struggle as "the criterion of the political." While cultural, economic, and aesthetic activities may go on without such antagonism, political ones require that individuals sacrifice themselves for others. Politics also divides us into friend-enemy groupings. Despite his exaltation of heroism, Schmitt is not making a case for continuous bloodshed. Rather he defends the nation-state, which arose in early modern Europe in the wake of religious wars as a means for taming belligerence. It was the assertion of power by national sovereigns over feuding aristocrats and meddlesome churchmen that allowed the "state" to create public order. For the sake of internal tranquillity, sovereigns claimed the exclusive right to make friend-enemy distinctions in their own societies. They also maintained some degree of religious and cultural homogeneity among their subjects, but made life unpleasant for theologians who presumed to speak for the state. And it was the agreement by jurists and kings that wars would no longer be holy, but merely formal procedures (*guerres en forme*) that served to institutionalize international conflict. Limited struggles fought over negotiable issues by professional armies were more appealing to national sovereigns than "just wars." Struggles were no longer to be waged against a diabolized enemy or proclaimed by ecclesiastical officials.

According to Schmitt, it was to the credit of European civilization that it fashioned a system of states that could limit political violence. This system endured in the face of the French Revolution, the advance of military technology, the rise of modern ideologies, and the war on sovereignty waged by constitutional liberals. It finally grew weak, however, and began to collapse in the 20th century. The disintegration of sovereign national states and of multinational sovereign states, Schmitt contended, will not bring down the curtain on political existence. On the contrary, human struggle and friend-enemy groupings will continue at a more intense level than ever before. Poisonous wars typified by terrorism and fights over "values" are already replacing the limited geopolitical contests that European states fought in the 18th and 19th centuries. Schmitt warns repeatedly that war will accelerate in proportion to the rate at which traditional states vanish. Struggles will grow progressively worse, as enemies come to be defined as ideological foes, not rival states.

But the role of national states turns on the question of sovereignty. Sovereignty, for Schmitt, centers on the question of who in a society "decides" the collective course to be taken in a critical situation, particularly in the face of a public threat. Since war is the most perilous threat faced by a society, a sovereign, either individually or collegially, must determine friend-enemy distinctions. It is the sovereign who (or which) decides on what steps are to be taken to combat the public enemy. The question of "*Quis judicabit?*" (which is Thomas Hobbes's phrase) is the one being currently disputed by partisans of the American President and in the Congress. Schmitt thought this dispute about who defines and who deals with public threats inevitable in a state in which political authority is no longer firmly fixed.

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Nor did he see any way out of that dispute with the passing of sovereign national states. Abolishing states that were territorially and ethnically limited would not end group struggles or the need for sovereigns. It would only transfer those problems to a supranational level, without the framework of established loyalties and procedures that had characterized the older state system. "Humanity, as such," Schmitt observes, "cannot wage war because it has no enemy at least on this planet." Yet, wars can be waged "in the name of humanity" by particular states that seek to "usurp a universal concept against its military opponent." Thus groups that appeal to humanity as a "useful ideological instrument of imperialist expansion" continue to make friend-enemy distinctions. They also have sovereigns who draw those distinctions for others and who do so while invoking "humanity." Those who opt to oppose such self-appointed spokesmen for humanity must thereafter mobilize and recognize their own sovereigns. Friend-enemy distinctions and the threat of war thereby reemerge without limited national states, in a "battle for humanity."

Fukuyama assumes that these problems would not occur, if we remained busy making money and practicing international democracy. However, as Schmitt understood, humans are "dangerous, dynamic beings" who are willing to fight over economics as well as territorial differences. Why should people stop fighting over others' acquisitions just because

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they live without deprivation? Though all classes in America today are more affluent than they were in the 1930's, theft and robbery have increased exponentially in the last fifty years. In recent times, moreover, journalists and educators have taken to squabbling over political doctrines, so that even opposition to ideology has now turned into metaphysical anticommunism and its Menshevik equivalent of global democratism. In *The New Republic* (November 6, 1989) Morton Kondracke rejoices that American foreign policy is now in the hands of a "Democracy Gang" embracing Desmond Tutu, Stephen Solarz, and the National Endowment for Democracy. This international movement has been able to focus American foreign policy on aiding those with compatible views by "diplomatic intervention, military assistance (in El Salvador and the Philippines, for example) and on rare occasions direct or covert use of force."

I for one will put my money on the Democracy Gang and on even more violent bands of ideologues as future peace-disturbers. If Fukuyama's vision has any importance, it will be as a weapon in a crusade being waged by political redeemers. It is a (perhaps unintended) blueprint for the intensification of politics. And the conspicuous solemnity with which global democrats have been discussing its reprised Enlightenment suppositions suggests their own interest in current struggles. Their decision to lavish attention on the essay is itself a polemical move intended to put into relief their own foreign policy objectives. The publication and reception of the essay, it may be readily assumed, have resulted from heated debates in which the editors of *The National Interest* have been far from neutral. Fukuyama's outline of a globalist vision appeared exactly where it did as a tactic in a continuing struggle against those who trivialize Charles Krauthammer's (not Hegel's) recipe for universal political happiness. Both the publication and celebration of the essay are nothing more or nothing less.

Today (November 12, 1989) the Sunday *Washington Post* reports that "nationalist, sectarian and conservative forces" are resurfacing in Poland together with Polish democracy. Apparently, American journalists have failed to terminate world history.

Home Repairs

by Robert B. Shaw

Climbing up the rented extension ladder
on the way toward patching his own roof
he halted midway, taken a little dizzy,
holding tight a ridged aluminum rung
and steadying his shoulder bag of needments—
hammer, nails, a few split cedar shingles—
then went ahead, without a second stop
getting himself beyond his second story.
Although his cuff jerked back each time
he gripped another rung he never thought
of what was on the untanned underside
of his right wrist: modest, whitening scar,
too well stitched to blaze much of a trail
back to last year's lapse of equilibrium.
Clean that rain-gutter next, he thought. Up top,
he leaned himself back on the low-pitched,
sun-warmed slope and looked around, no vertigo
to cope with, just a moment's sheer surprise
at seeing down below so many small things
docilely disposed, in such trim order:
lawn mowed, car washed and waxed, zinnias weeded.
He hadn't known that he had come so far.

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The Agony of Gorbachev

by Hugh Ragsdale

Mikhail Gorbachev has evidently imagined that a government turned virtuous would elicit a generous response from a naturally virtuous people. It is an "immaculate misconception" because the Russian people, always lethargic in the face of their leviathan government, have endured in the Soviet experiment a unique erosion of Edward Gibbon's old Greco-Roman ideal of civic virtue. Lord Acton suggested that power corrupts. Studs Terkel maintains that utter impotence corrupts more yet. But the Soviet people have experienced the worst corruption of all, the juxtaposition of unlimited power in the government and unqualified impotence in the people.

There is a simple explanation for the trials and travails of Gorbachev's program of reform. He has misconceived the Russian variant of human nature, and he suffers from an ahistorical perception of the Russian political tradition. Moreover, his game plan is surprisingly blind to Russia's experience with reform, and in three ways in particular.

First, there is a distinct parallel between the crisis that afflicts the Soviet Union today and the similar crisis in 1917, which the Russian Empire did not survive. To the government of Nicholas II, it seemed obvious that both economic and political reform were required to secure the long-term survival of an outworn system. Yet the reforms that were devised, the Witte program of planned industrialization and the awkward constitution of 1906, were applied in such a way as to aggravate in the short run the very situation they were designed to alleviate in the long run. Gorbachev's reforms obviously entail a similar risk.

Second, Gorbachev sells himself as a populist and a democrat. Thus he ignores what is perhaps the most conspicuous and persistent characteristic of Russian politics: the progressive nature of the authoritarian state. Contrary to American popular mythology, which cannot free itself of its mistaken image of George III, monarchy in early modern Europe (1500-1789) was usually an agency of progressive modernization, frequently also an agency of popular justice. It was aided mightily by an ally ultimately more progressive than itself, the bourgeoisie. The monarchy in Russia, on the other hand, lacking a bourgeois ally, has been the *unique* agency of progressive, though often brutal, innovation, and public opinion has typically ranged from passive and lethargic to conservative and even reactionary. No one has summed up this interpretation of the Russian political tradition so pithily as the dissident mathematician Igor Shafarevich in a remarkably imaginative work entitled *Sotsializm kak iavlenia mirovoi istorii* (*Socialism as a Manifestation of World History*). Shafarevich quotes the fifth-century B.C. Chinese sage, Lord Shang: "Where the people is strong, the state is weak; and where the people is weak, the state is strong."

Third, Gorbachev has failed, in his naiveté, to consult those political theorists who would have been most useful to him. The ancient Kremlinologist whom we know as Ecclesiastes would have warned him of the difficulty of reform: "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun." He would have called Gorbachev's attention to the Soviet bureaucracy: "what is crooked cannot be made straight." And he would have cautioned him about economic planners: "what is lacking cannot be numbered." Another unimpeachable authority, the Marquis de Sade, would have warned that "crime serves nature's intentions as well as wisdom and virtue [do]." Thus he would have had Gorbachev "sally forth into this perverse world" in a distinctly more cynical spirit. And the American theorist of the "booboisie," H.L. Mencken, would have told Gorbachev that only countries naturally rich and safe can afford democracy, for "democracy is the most expensive and nefarious kind of government on earth."

Ecclesiastes stands here for the idea of cultural conservatism. No state, no matter how mighty, has yet acquired the power to change mentalities, the cake of custom, in a mere

Hugh Ragsdale is a professor of Russian history at the University of Alabama.

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fraction of a generation. The Marquis de Sade we might also paraphrase: until Gorbachev succeeds in attaching an Adam Smith corollary to his naively Stoical preachings of virtue, he will find that private vices do not make public benefits.

The force of these observations is revealed in the particulars of Gorbachev's policies. His first entry onto the stage of reform was the now notorious campaign against alcohol, on the face of it a great idea to which no one of sound mind or morals could object. But there were precedents that should have informed Gorbachev of the pitfalls of trying to separate Russians from alcohol. The earliest surviving Russian historical document, the 12th-century *Primary Chronicle*, explains that the Russians chose to convert to Christianity rather than Islam because Islam proscribed the use of alcohol, and "drink is the joy of the Russes."

A more recent parallel sets an even more dubious precedent. A month after the outbreak of World War I, that unholy holy man, Gregory Rasputin, intervened in a temperance campaign. Well-known for his pro-German sentiments, Rasputin persuaded Nicholas II that the state's monopoly on the production of spirits was unworthy of the moral strivings of the nation at war. Nicholas decreed prohibition and thereby wiped out the single largest source of revenue of a government fighting for its life against a superior opponent.

Gorbachev's campaign has had similar consequences. In the first year of its implementation, it cost the Soviet budget 45 billion rubles of revenue—and that at a time when falling world oil prices were depleting the largest Soviet source of earnings in hard currency. To make matters worse, thirsty Russians transferred their business from state facilities to private concerns, and the production of *samogon* (white lightning) soon ballooned to such proportions that sugar simply disappeared from the consumer economy. At that point, the government was compelled to use its diminishing funds of hard currency to enter the world sugar market, where it spent over a billion dollars to buy 2.2 million tons of sugar which Comrade Castro could not supply.

A story universally told in the Soviet Union in the summer of 1986 maintained that it was precisely the anti-alcohol campaign that precipitated the Chernobyl disaster. The technicians at the nuclear facility were perfectly competent, so the story goes, to operate it in a drunken stupor, as years of experience had convincingly shown. It was only the unfamiliar condition of sobriety that confused them.

According to appearances, Gorbachev has had much better success with his *glasnost* campaign, but there is an enormous amount of Russian tradition antagonistic to his efforts. Most fundamentally, in a country that never had a Latin Catholic culture there is no foundation for the humanism that in modern Europe became liberalism. In this sense, the Iron Curtain is now a thousand years old. The most socially comprehensive form of Russian culture is Orthodoxy, *pravoslavie*. Consider its semantics: literally, right praising. The semantics of the contrary idea, that of dissent, *inakomysliashchie*, are, literally, otherwise-thinking. The point is exemplified by what may be the only ideological revolt in Russian history, that of the Old Believers against the reforms of Patriarch Nikon in the 17th century. An old Russian proverb maintains that "all evil comes from opinion." I wonder how long our contemporary Russians will tolerate their current conflict of opinion.

Gorbachev's *glasnost* is a total overturn of the old Soviet practice of secrecy. As the current saying in Moscow has it, it has become more interesting to read than to live (i.e., it is still more than difficult to eat). Every day brings new and surprising revelations. In the field of the arts, Pasternak, Zamyatin, Nabokov, and even Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag* have been published. In politics, Stalin is held responsible for bringing Hitler to power, for the brutal repression of 40 to 50 million victims of collectivization and the purges, and for the defeats of World War II that cost a newly estimated total of 40 million more lives. In economics, we have discovered Gorbachev's salary (1,200 rubles a month), and we have learned that the Soviet budget deficit is three times larger than ours relative to the GNP. Moreover, the *Moscow News* tells us that the Soviet Union ranks between 50th and 60th in the world in per capita standards of consumption.

News of this sort from Soviet sources is little short of sensational, and the conditions that make it possible—not the conditions described—are understandably the occasion of much rejoicing. If the new policy in the media is to be appreciated justly and realistically, however, it must be treated with certain reservations. The Soviet press is not yet free, as the journalists who work in it readily admit. It is simply subject to new kinds of controls that serve new kinds of purposes. It is possible that *glasnost* is a transient and reversible phenomenon. Further, it is not nearly so fundamental an achievement as that at which Gorbachev aims in his more ambitious program of *perestroika*.

More seriously still, *glasnost* produces obvious liabilities as well as benefits. For example, it inflames unrest among the nationalities, most obviously in the Caucasus, where the conflict of the Armenians and the Azeris has now been followed by that of the Georgians and the Abkhazians; in the Baltic, where the Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians are demonstrating against the Russians (and vice versa); and, most recently, in Moldavia, where the native Rumanian majority wants to do business in its own language.

Perhaps the most serious threat posed by the policy of *glasnost* is just beginning, and it is here that the historical shortsightedness of Gorbachev's public information policy may be most evident. Some of his editors seem bent on outdoing the shamelessness of Rousseau's *Confessions*. If they continue to pursue so stubbornly as they have recently the intention to uncover all of the "blank spots" (*belye piatna*) of Soviet history, it is almost inevitable that they will convict Soviet government of so much scandal, dirt, and blood, so much crime against the people, as to raise the question of its own legitimacy. How can such a government plausibly lay claim to the loyalty of the population? That population is already muttering rather loudly that the mess of their lives was the work of the Jews who made the Revolution.

In addition to the increasingly lurid revelations of Stalin's crime, recent articles have called into question the whole doctrine of Marxism and argued that Lenin himself was responsible for establishing the tradition of flouting legal and

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constitutional norms.

Gorbachev's *perestroika* is a more formidable and forbidding undertaking than *glasnost*. If we examine the *perestroika* of the past, we find ample reason to take warning. It is said that Peter the Great (1682-1725) pulled uphill with the strength of ten while the whole nation pulled downhill, and his son Alexis was associated with a conspiracy which aimed to dispose of Peter in the fashion of so many of his 18th-century successors. Catherine II (1762-1796) wrote a project for a liberal codification of the laws, but her bureaucracy and Legislative Assembly contrived to defeat the idea. We know with what enthusiasm the Russian nobility responded to the great reforms of Alexander II (1855-1881). Prime Minister Peter Stolypin attempted (1906-1911) to free the Russian peasant from a semi-medieval system of collective land tenure in order to make him a private proprietor, but the peasant successfully resisted.

The contemporary Russian public evidently regards *perestroika* in the abstract as a good idea. A public opinion poll recently taken in the Soviet Union by the *Christian Science Monitor* (with what reliability we can only guess) showed that 61 percent of the population believed that *perestroika* would eventually succeed. On the other hand, a *Time* magazine poll taken in Moscow recently showed that a plurality of Soviet citizens expect *perestroika* to make the material conditions of their life worse, and the evidence more than bears out their expectations. The press is full of stories of hard luck for the consumer. One item prominently featured recently is the shortage of baby food, a situation that occasions long lines and ignites hot tempers. The rationing of sugar is in effect, and most of the rest of the list of foodstuffs is said to be under consideration. Hardship has evidently produced a new wave of criminal activity. In various parts of the Soviet Union crime is currently growing, according to the chief Soviet judicial officer (General Procurator A. I. Sukharev), at rates ranging from 32 to 88 percent per year. This from the August 12, 1989, edition of *Pravda*!

However much it may be approved in general, the particulars of *perestroika* affect the interests of different groups of people in different ways. As hard as it is to get a fix on the opinion of the "dark people," the peasants, we may infer that they ought logically to approve of Gorbachev's economic policy, as it envisions paying for their produce in hard currency and dissolving many of the features of the hated collective farm system. It also promises them free and therefore higher prices for the commodity in shortest supply and greatest demand in the country, the food which they produce. The workers, on the other hand, will have to suffer the cost of those higher prices. Moreover, they will suffer lower pay for poor work, punishment for drunkenness, and even dismissal and unemployment. They are afraid of *perestroika*. But the social category that has the most to lose is that large group of people in retirement. The pensioners comprise 20 percent of the population, nearly 60 million people. Their incomes are fixed, some of them at 50 rubles (approximately $80) a person, a month, and they have already seen the prices of some commodities multiply by five or six times. Much of the population exhibits a roaring rage against the "speculators," i.e., those taking

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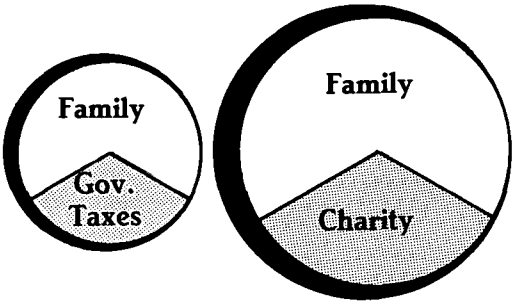

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advantage of the newly enfranchised cooperative businesses that operate as a form of free enterprise.

There is a whole series of ironies in the current Soviet scene. Marxism teaches the primacy of economics in social and political development, that politics is a passive function of economics. Yet the history of the Soviet Union has illustrated with more dramatic irony than that of any other country the elementary error of Marx's teaching. Lenin explained and Stalin illustrated the primacy of politics, and now Gorbachev, having defied Marxist logic and common sense together by growing ever stronger in politics as he grows ever weaker in economics, is unable to wield his vast political primacy in traditional Soviet fashion to lift the nation out of deepening depression.

There is one bright ray of hope in *perestroika*. On March 9, 1989, *Pravda* announced that 20 McDonald restaurants are soon to be opened in Moscow. The only question is, will 20 be enough?

Demokratizatsiia is also a troubled idea. It is in a sense produced by disillusionment with the quality of the "new Soviet man" who presumably staffs the bureaucracy. He was supposed to have represented some imaginary compound of Poor Richard, Samuel Smiles, and the Boy Scouts, a kind of Calvinist communist imbued with the ideals of socialist construction. He has failed, and Gorbachev is now evidently searching for the same type of personality in the virtues of the common man—or, better, woman. But the promise of the search seems compromised by two considerations. The first is that if *perestroika* and price reform seriously threaten the interests of different groups in society, then what reason is there to believe that the public will support the program?

The second consideration has to do with the nature of Russian democracy, and here I think that we ought to recognize that in our studies of foreign cultures we treat the subject of Russian democracy quite wrongly. Our first mistake is to think that democracy is conspicuous in Russian society only by its absence. On the contrary, in various nooks and corners of Russian life, it has a stronger grip on the people than it does among us. If authoritarianism has been a prominent feature of Russian life, so has egalitarianism. It is naturally more evident on the streets and in the apartments in the Soviet Union than it is in American libraries.

I cite four examples. First is the *artel*, a cooperative organization especially prominent in the economic life of the emerging lower middle class before World War I. There were industrial, commercial, and credit *artels* as well as *artels* of consumers. The spirit of the organization was purely egalitarian, and the management of it was democratic. Second is an institution far more familiar to us, the *mir* or *obshchina*, the peasant commune. It was the darling of the intelligentsia, both radical and conservative, as it represented the spirit of the *demos* in its presumably pristine form. It had a seamier side, one that ran to drink and dissipation, but democratic it invariably was. The third such institution is criminal society. There was honor among these thieves, and blood oaths; they swore, among other things, never to cooperate in any fashion with conventional civil society and to kill any of their fellows who did. We can see glimpses of their organizations in most of the memoirs from the camps. Both the KGB and the FBI are currently devoting massive attention to them, and anyone at all can see their descendants in Brighton Beach, New York. My last example is nearly omnipresent in Soviet Russia: it is the city bus. Each city bus contains a spontaneous but quite distinct government, and in spite of its volatile and transient character, the fact that a part of this government departs the scene and a new part enters at every stop, the character of the government remains noticeably stable and uniform. The city bus manifests in its most spontaneous form that cantankerous interventionist impulse that J.R. Talmon has termed totalitarian democracy.

Admittedly, democracy has not been a powerful phenomenon at the national level, but that may be fortunate, because our second serious mistake in considering Russian democracy is to imagine that it is naturally progressive. It has often been otherwise. Thus the transfer of a democratic dynamic from local into national politics in the Soviet Union might have a retrograde or even paralytic impact on the course of national development.

Let us consider the evidence. The peasant commune stubbornly repudiated economic opportunity, seeing in it apparently some burden of obligation rather than godsend of promise. We can recall the response of Leo Tolstoy's serfs to his proposal to set them free. They scratched their heads and declined. The Stolypin "wager on the sober and the strong," the dissolution of the commune, and the inauguration of private proprietorship they resisted more vigorously. The "land and liberty" for which the Russian peasant longed evidently did not mean freedom for the individual. It meant freedom from the capricious tyranny of the landlord, not from that of the beloved tyrannically democratic commune. In the film of Brighton Beach, *The Russians Are Here*, made by the PBS station in Boston, the émigrés repeat two observations like a constant refrain: "There is too little security in America, and there is too much freedom." I hold with the controversial thesis that Muscovite folkways are "risk-aversive." If so, Gorbachev is attempting to make war on the whole character of the Russian people.

We have been reminded by the striking miners of the Donbas and the Kuzbas of the unpopularity of the new Nepmen, the free enterprisers. Gorbachev's resolution of that problem reflects the old proverb that "the shortages will be divided among the peasants," for the allocation of additional goods to the strikers will simply increase the shortages elsewhere. Similarly, a part of the merchandise of Moscow has just been reserved for residents: it is not to be sold to the several million itinerant shoppers who visit Moscow daily.

Incidentally, the activity of the miners may well be the first spontaneous and democratic entry of the Russian public into the national arena of *perestroika* on a non-ethnic issue. This is evidently what Gorbachev has been seeking as a desirable development. It might just as easily be regarded as ominous.

Perhaps Gorbachev's most immediate problem at present is that *glasnost* and political reform have proceeded much faster than anyone imagined possible, and the *perestroika* of economic reform has moved even more

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slowly and reluctantly than seemed likely. Now, the combined factors of the fast pace of political reform and the slow pace of economic reform have catalyzed the expression of discontent and thereby threaten the stability of the country. If the reform is at once too fast and too slow, it is as hard to imagine now as it was in 1914 what kind of policy might deliver the country from disaster.

As a colleague of mine put it, Gorbachev has in the present crisis no usable Russian traditions. The enlightened despotism of the 18th century was a progressive model of modernization for a conservative and uneducated people, although it necessarily violated their tastes and their somewhat undeveloped concept of Russian national interests.

Nowadays, since the Soviet government has educated the minds of the people, *we* can recognize his policy as a genuine expression of their national interests—and, happily, of ours. But centuries of authoritarian government have virtually paralyzed his people, leaving them unable to undertake the most essential part of their role in his reform: cooperation among themselves and with the government in spontaneous and responsible enterprise.

To put Gorbachev's dilemma in a nutshell, he represents the good old Russian tradition of the progressive initiative of central authority in the interest—sometimes unrecognized—of a public disinclined to undertake such initiative for itself. Unfortunately, he presides over the public's destiny in an age when progressive reform is more and more consensually regarded in many parts of the world as liberal and democratic, free and enterprising, which *his* public is still disinclined to be. The chances of his finding a way out of this dilemma in less than several generations are not very good.

For Gorbachev to succeed, I believe he will have to build his constituency squarely on two traditionally disfranchised groups in Soviet society: first, the church, and second, women. The church has, admittedly, a disappointing record in the history of Russia, both before and after the revolution, of asserting itself for the protection of the people from the ravages of the state. On the other hand, it is the natural vehicle these days for constructive sentiments of an alternative kind. Many of its adherents are all too willing to resort to the impulses of aggressive or even vicious nationalism that would aggravate an already threatening inter-ethnic combat. But it represents, too, the tradition of the popular St. Sergius of Radonezh, of the *umilenie* (loving kindness) of the Virgin of Vladimir, of the reviving ideas of *hesychasm* (a Byzantine mysticism of meekness, mercy, and piety), and it provides the most obvious rallying point for a Russian renaissance of a civil and decent kind.

As for women in Russia, more than elsewhere in Europe, they have been the stepchildren of an unusually misogynist society. "If the hair is long, the mind is short." But Gorbachev has recognized them, as he himself has said, as his "best supporters." He and they have similar sentiments about the prohibition of alcohol, mismanaged though the campaign was. They are sober and practical-minded. While many of the males soar high above tangible reality on waves of poetry, philosophy, mysticism, or alcohol, the women do the practical everyday work without which the system might cease to function at all. Their special responsibility in the family at home and in the nation at large has probably been an indispensable given since the purges and the war removed so many men from civil society. Russian men admit in their candid or inebriated moments that "only the women work."

Now having criticized Gorbachev vigorously, in order to balance the ledger of my account, it is only fair to observe that he is both an authentic hero and a genuine genius of original thinking. Only a fool or a hero would have undertaken this near-hubristic enterprise, and his scarcely believable mastery of the political *apparat* in the face of economic and ethnic chaos shows him to be far from foolish. Moreover, he has, in one of the world's most unlikely environments, wrestled mightily to learn the unhappy truths that set men free. New political thinking of the order of magnitude of Gorbachev's is so fresh and rare as to be nearly miraculous. If we compare him with 20th-century statesmen of comparable prominence, he far exceeds the originality and the daring of Churchill, Roosevelt, or de Gaulle, all of whom were culturally consonant with the countries which they governed, and he belongs perhaps in the league of Mao as revolutionary—not, of course, of Mao as administrator. Furthermore, he has dared and succeeded as few have to be a peacemaker, though Ronald Reagan—and perhaps Suzanne Massie—probably deserve more credit here than academic historians will soon give them.

Still, heroes and geniuses, in real life as in mythic epics, have been endowed by the gods with flaws to match their gifts, flaws without which their striving would not be epic, and Gorbachev may yet become the victim of a Soviet variant of Greek tragedy.

What are the implications of all of this for us in the Western world? We must wish Gorbachev better success than the imprudence of some of his policies seems to promise, and we should support him more than we do—chiefly symbolically. We must welcome his foreign policy in Afghanistan (in withdrawing Soviet troops), Poland, Hungary, and the GDR, in arms control, in Mongolia, and in Vietnam. We must find him, after all, as good for us as the Soviet population finds him doubtful for itself.

For we are now witnessing more genuinely than before the convergence of systems that has been prophesied. Gorbachev is doing just what we have demanded from the Russians. Unfortunately, despite our self-satisfied habit of sneering like Pharisees at the shortcomings of Soviet society, the most fundamental problems of the Soviet model are also ours. They are the natural outgrowth of the hubris with which the Enlightenment effectively contaminated all of modern secular civilization—the pagan credo that man is the master of all things.

Mencken's observation that democracy is the most expensive and nefarious government on earth suggests that the Revolt of the Masses leads almost inevitably to revolutions not merely of rising but of unrealistic expectations. Ours simply runs its course with more bourgeois moderation, or dignity, than did the Russian—with some exceptions, of course: crime, drugs, and AIDS. But the Russians, having for a couple of generations exchanged conservative for radical mysticism, are now becoming better prepared than we are, under the tutelage of such prophets as Solzhenitsyn, to escape the destiny of an unholy future. ◇

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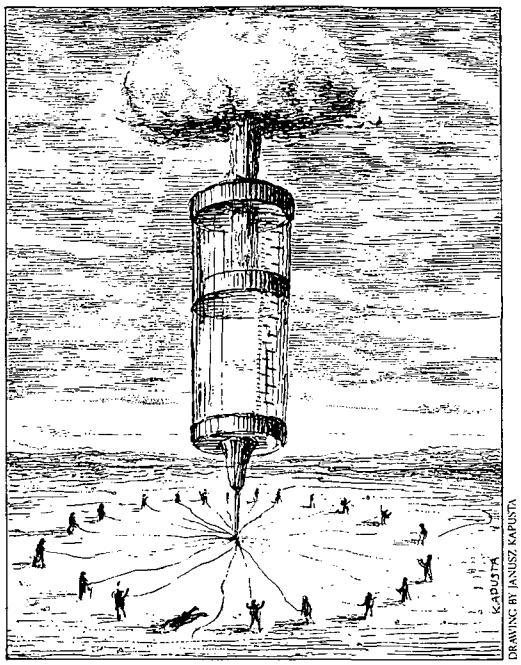
Character and Nuclear Anxiety

by John P. Sisk



American society is widely recognized as youth-oriented, but it has been a long time since any authoritative source has given us really good news about the young. Recent reports from the American Medical Association, the National Research Council, and the Council of Physical Fitness have been especially discouraging: the young exercise too little, eat too much of the wrong food, and get too fat. Most of those who are worried about physical flabbiness are even more concerned about the spiritual flabbiness it implies. No doubt they would agree with the 27 educators, school officials, and policymakers who, after their conference in Washington in the fall of 1984, announced that the moral condition of the young was bad and likely to get worse. Young people today, they noted, "are more likely to commit suicide, or kill one another, and males are more likely to make unmarried females pregnant." Their conclusion, issued in a "Thanksgiving Statement," was that "schools in general are not doing enough to counter the symptoms of serious decline in youth character."

Since America has always been a land of individual opportunity, a nervousness about the character of the young is inevitable: if the young become morally and physically flabby, we may individually and communally miss our opportunities. The character of the young has always been a precious natural resource. Even the immigrant Mafia kingpin Joseph Bonanno, in his autobiographical *A Man of Honor*, lamented that he was "too old for the modern world" in which there are no "certain fixed values" to guide the young as they strive toward manhood.

John P. Sisk is Arnold Professor of the Humanities at Gonzaga University. His forthcoming book is Tyrannies of Virtue *(University of Oklahoma Press).*

Fixed values (traditionally approved, of course) are what American character is all about, whether you take your stand with Cotton Mather, Theodore Roosevelt, or Jerry Falwell. And character, whether in the service of an establishment or a successful revolution, helps to keep human affairs moving at a manageable pace. This is no less true of America than of the Mafia and the Boy Scouts, both of which are threatened by the accelerating and centrifugal force of freelancing individualism. Indeed, the Boy Scout oath is not too different from the Mafia code. When Joe Bonanno's tradition started to break down, he says he began to live between hammer and anvil. This is about where the 27 educators and policymakers saw the nation's schools.

One of the last persons to be thoroughly optimistic about American youth was the late Ralph Gleason, a founding editor of *Rolling Stone*. For him the good news was that contemporary popular music "is an energy source today unlike anything in history, yes, even including religion." This music, in its role of "societal glue," was to Gleason a mind-expanding and view-realigning force that could not help but change society for the better, and in fact had already been incorporated fruitfully by advertisers, politicians, and preachers. Here, argued Gleason, was a program for the moral invigoration of youth.

Americans, of course, have long associated traditional character formation with the impulse-denying work ethic of the Puritans. Often enough they have allowed their thinking about character to be overdetermined by a caricature version of that ethic, so that it appears to be a moral straitjacket. This is why Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*, with its portrayals of a prelapsarian natural world uninhibited by bourgeois sexual conventions and crippling personal commitments, was so popular for so long after its appearance in

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1928. Samoans, she wrote, "rate romantic fidelity in terms of days or weeks at most, and are inclined to scoff at tales of life-long devotion."

We can guess that neither the Mafia nor the Boy Scouts would have thrived in such a society in which nature was put on the side of the natural, sensual self, where it belongs, in opposition to those crippling personal commitments to which people are inclined when they have been formed by culture. And even if the Australian anthropologist Derek Freeman is right when he argues that Mead was talking less about real than imaginary Samoans, she has had a half-century in which to spread the welcome news that nature could be trusted and that puritanical Americans were losing out on life.

Of course, Mead, Joe Bonanno, and conceivably even a former Colombian drug lord like Carlos Lehder Rivas (jailed since the summer of 1988) needed a few of the uptight bourgeois virtues to succeed in their line of work, no less than the literary artist does. This need, however, has not kept artists from feeling uneasy about such virtues, since they appear to be hostile to the generous commitment to experience that makes art possible. Lionel Trilling, in a 1933 notebook entry worried that the enforced decorum of his academic life, especially when measured against the more unbuttoned life of Hemingway, was ruining his chance to be a genuinely creative writer.

Margaret Mead could trust impulse because she believed that it had its own Apollonian controls. Timothy Leary seems to have trusted LSD for the same reason: the bad effects of the drug were the fault "not of the drug nor of the drug taker but of the people around him who lose their cool and call the cops or the doctors." He saw American society, led by the "puritanical Americans of the older generation," becoming an "air-conditioned anthill." However, being as confident about his LSD as Marx was about his dialectic or Gleason about his rock music, Leary expected that within fifteen years a New LSD Man would, to everyone's advantage, be in control of the country. Neither the 27 educators nor Joe Bonanno would look forward with pleasure to such a future. However, it sounds more than a little like what Mead in her 1970 *Culture and Commitment* called "a prefigural culture," one characterized by a "continuing dialogue in which the young, free to act on their own initiative, can lead their elders in the direction of the unknown." A year before she published this remark, some of those young persons, acting on their own initiative in Oakland in anticipation of the arrival of Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones, announced in a manifesto that "we will play your music in rock 'n' roll marching bands as we tear down the jails and free the prisoners, as we tear down the State schools and free the students."

We have here, perhaps, several versions of a liberation scenario in which an irresistible force can be confidently submitted to, because an Apollonian component guarantees benevolent results. It is possible that the Colombian drug lord believed that the same component was in cocaine and saw no incompatibility between its effects and the firmness of character necessary for a principled struggle against American imperialism. Indeed, one might sense a megamyth-in-the-making that dramatizes a New Man for a New World. This charismatic cultural hero is, say, a brilliant and bisexual young general manager of a worldwide distributorship of erotic videocassettes; his office portrait of Daniel Ortega is sandwiched between portraits of John Lennon and Yoko Ono; he snorts cocaine during his coffee breaks while listening to the Rolling Stones; he charitably cultivates marijuana plants in his basement for his less favorably situated friends; he lives in a comfortable *ménage à trois* with his best girlfriend and best boyfriend; he spends his weekends working for unilateral nuclear disarmament; and he cries easily.

The expectation has always been that people with character are more likely to give a good account of themselves in crises and to go down with honor, perhaps even with grace, if they do not survive. It can, of course, be argued that people with character tend to go into crisis situations because character formation censors out the information that could resolve the crisis, or at least make possible a less extreme solution. Certainly, people with inflexible characters (such as Cervantes' Don Quixote, Shakespeare's Hotspur, Molière's Alceste, or Melville's Ahab) tend to be crisis-prone, which means that they get into the right kind of trouble for good stories. Perhaps this is why utopian scenarios are rarely memorable for strong characters. (It may also be why Soviet realism, propelled as it is by utopian aspiration, has for so long favored a literature of happy endings.) Of course, in utopias the total censorship of news is often the substitute for character formation. And as the dystopias of Aldous Huxley and George Orwell make clear, in the effort to install a utopia the managers might have to reinforce this substitute with an artificially induced orgy experience (something like the soma-induced states of togetherness in *Brave New World* or the ecstatic "Two Minutes Hate" sessions in *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*). This suggests that the organizers of the 1938 Nazi rally at Nuremberg knew something about what Gleason called societal glue, something that one-worlders like Marx, Mead, and Leary failed to take into account.

War traditionally has been the supreme crisis. William James was appalled at the idea of modern war, but at the same time he was convinced that the virtues of the military character were indispensable to civilization. He resolved this contradiction in "The Moral Equivalent of War," in which he proposed a government-sponsored character-hardening program of socially useful activities that would have the effect of a controlled crisis. But since character formation was identified with the reduction of options, what James proposed as pro-civilization could be identified by others as anti-life. One cannot imagine Mead's Samoans, Leary's New Man, or the creators of the Oakland manifesto enlisting in James's army. Even the US Army has become nervous about its identification as an institution that puritanically restricts available options. Indeed, its popular advertising slogan, "Be All You Can Be," suggests that the Pentagon may have been inspired by Helen Gurley Brown's *Having It All*.

At present—thanks to the part bourgeois talents and character traits have played in creating the crises circumstances in which the world now lives—the psychological equivalent of war is nuclear anxiety. Nuclear anxiety not only reduces options but reduces them in the most frustrat-

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ing of ways, for the technological advances that make nuclear anxiety possible are also those that promise a multiplication of options and an enhancement of life. Nuclear anxiety, therefore, threatens us in the same way that the impulse-denying ethic of our forefathers did. In a land flowing with milk and honey we are faced with the prospect of returning to our repressive beginnings. Under these circumstances, the drug-dependent lifestyle of many Americans implies that the Colombian drug lords have become their true life-affirming and option-multiplying champions. They stand shoulder-to-shoulder against the same bourgeois conventionality that inspired Walt Whitman to boast in "Song of Myself" that he wore his hat indoors or outdoors, as he pleased. It's a safe bet, however, that Joe Bonanno, a Man of Honor who has always prided himself on his sartorial decorum, would never wear his hat indoors.

Nuclear anxiety has reinforced a particular perception of reality, according to which, as Lionel Trilling put it in *The Liberal Imagination*, "reality is always material reality, hard, resistant, unformed, impenetrable, and unpleasant." And it is this perception of reality that makes it hard to believe in the validity of fixed principles and easy to believe that the people who have them are either fanatics, hypocrites, or prisoners within a monstrous deformation of consciousness. That reality, resistant and unpleasant though it may be, is a vale of soul-making, as Keats believed, and that character is formed in the world's torrent, as Goethe believed, can be the worst of bad news to those who hold dear to this perception of reality.

Under these circumstances drugs, especially cocaine, have proved to many to be good news. Drugs are a way of living with the nuclear anxiety, which may be nothing less than the anxiety of being, writ large. To the user hounded by the necessity of choosing among too many options, the message of drugs is that all options are equal, so that choice ceases to be a problem. Drugs—a substitute for character—are in their own way not only a moral equivalent of war, but a way of returning to Margaret Mead's Samoa. For if you can trust the present, as drugs and Mead's Samoa say you can, you don't need character.

But as both Heraclitus and Bob Dylan have assured us, the times keep on changing so that you can't step into the same present twice. Timothy Leary is still into behavior modification, but now it is computer games, not LSD. And it's quite possible that those framers of the Oakland manifesto who did not liberate themselves into extinction now not only wear three-piece suits, but also vote Republican. Perhaps some of them, having experienced a measure of the world's torrents, have even learned that character formation can be a liberating response to the anxiety of being, and that without it the artificial paradise offered by the Colombian drug lords can be hard to resist.

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The Blurb Writer

by Dabney Stuart

In one year on the back
of 26 books his name appeared
under paragraphs he rarely
remembered writing. In some
cases he couldn't recall
the book's author, or the book either.
Yet there they were—the books
scattered on his desk, a table,
the floor—covered with his indisputable
words, and his name under them
like an egg they had laid.
It *was* his name.
He recognized it.
But he felt as if it had escaped
him, gone off on its own,
performed those blurbs like obscene
dances, and then stretched out
prostrate beneath them, exhausted—
or, like a party balloon suddenly
untied, gone skitting
randomly, inscribing paragraphs
of air, beneath which it lay at last,
shriveled, deflated, spent.
Was this what it meant
to be a name? he wondered.
That was what he'd wanted,
aimed for, lain prostrate himself
at the feet of other names to achieve.
The blurbs themselves, when he read
them, mercifully blurred,
glared back at him
like so much birds--t on a windshield.
He had just enough perspective
left to wonder at the curiosity
it would take to push someone
past them into the books they crusted.
This is death he thought. *I have*
created death, and he saw
his blurbs rising like mushroom
clouds, carrying their sickness
into the atmosphere forever.
His fearless name huddled
beneath them, never giving up,
still trying to leave
its sign on the world.

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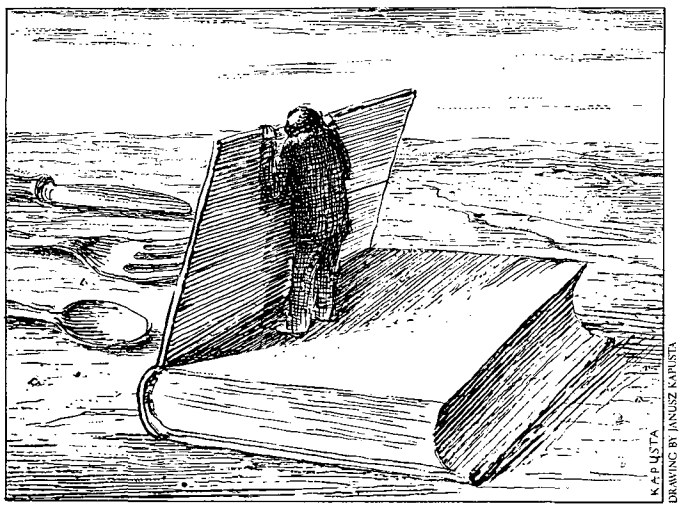
Brave Theory Puffing

by Hugh Kenner

"As civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines."
—T.B. Macaulny



An Appetite for Poetry
by Frank Kermode
Cambridge: Harvard University Press; 242 pp., $22.50

◆

"Few people," we find Frank Kermode saying by page 42 of his 46-page Prologue,—"Few people can take much pleasure in modern academic literary criticism except its practitioners, who do not mind that an intelligent outsider would surely find it both arcane and depressing." That means, the practitioners deem "intelligent outsider" an oxymoron, like "wise fool," for which the Greek is "sophomore." The thing to do with sophomores (the college kind) is to pump them as rapidly as possible full of intelligence. Understanding that there is no "literature," they will then sleep better. Some may hope for jobs talking about how there is no literature.

For instance, here's Robert Scholes, semiotician (a "meaning-specialist"). Scholes wants to "open up the way between the literary text and the social text in which we live"—I'm quoting Scholes, not Kermode—since "everything" cries out to be interpreted, not just what's miscalled "literature." Scholes is, he says, "a teacher of language and literature—or, better, of textuality."

Having set that up, with more detail, hence more fairness, than a summary can pretend to, Kermode next pulls the string of the guillotine. We now know, he says, what literature has become for Robert Scholes: "a semiotic sample, convenient because more portable than the entire social environment. On this view the redemption of the literary text seems to require its relegation to the position of one among an inexhaustible and indiscriminate array of other texts: in short, to save it is to destroy it. Such are the contradictions in which we find ourselves when we lose confidence in the existence and value of 'literature as such.'"

(I'm reminded of a long-ago professor whose view of Chaucer's work was this, that it provided the largest available sample of one Middle-English dialect. He was the same man who once lectured to a genteel audience on The Elizabethan Stage. It was so many feet wide, he said, so many feet deep, was fashioned of deal planking, was equipped with one or more trap doors. The lady required to move the vote of thanks found herself speechless.)

"Confidence in the existence and value of 'literature as such'" is entailed in Kermode's title, *An Appetite for Poetry*. If you've an appetite for kumquats, kumquats must exist, and be identifiable by you. You needn't feel obliged to delimit the Essence of the Kumquat. Nor does Kermode feel obliged to demonstrate that Wallace Stevens ("poetry") can offer richer

Hugh Kenner's most recent book is Mazes, *reviewed in the November issue.*

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rewards than Gloria Steinem (non-poetry, though, yes, "text"). He simply reprints his 1980 essay on Stevens. If you've an appetite for poetry you'll find it exhilarating. If not, not.

An Appetite for Poetry consists of ten reprinted essays (Milton, Stevens, Eliot, Empson, other themes) prefaced by that long polemic Prologue. Polemic? Well, the temperature stays moderate; but Kermode on The State of Criticism at the Present Time will touch off apoplexies, if only because he's so difficult to answer. He's not vulnerable to such knee-jerk responses as that he Just Doesn't Understand. For he doesn't rest his case on rebarbative jargon; he's read the stuff widely, even finds Paul de Man and Jacques Derrida rewarding, if only for what their acolytes never notice, their engaging sense of their own limitations. And when he does take on a theoretical issue, he'll slyly let Jonathan Culler articulate it.

For "Over the past dozen years or so it has been Culler's somewhat paradoxical merit to say with exceptional clarity exactly what he means—paradoxical because we now find him very lucidly complaining that certain persons hostile to his cause are guilty of encouraging students to succumb to 'an ideology of lucidity.'" One thing Culler is lucid about is where canons (read "curricula") come from. They come from a power structure with values (read "jobs") to hold on to, in cahoots with a still larger structure with a need to keep the masses in their place.

For Kermode, Culler is distracted by an atavistic belief that "literature" (the canonizable?) does somehow exist, though it's risky to make lists lest you abet the inert, who'll be happy when students just nod assent to those lists. But Culler, he says, "has very little idea of what a canon is, merely identifying the term with a state of affairs which his own metanarrative or cross-fiction (roughly, that of the revolutionary purge) requires him to deplore." He goes on to make five observations, each accorded a long paragraph. In summary:

(1) Canons exclude as well as include. "If you include anything and everything you naturally lose the idea of canon completely."

(2) Canons are not "enclosures full of static monuments." They go with commentary, i.e., continuing discussion, which "gives the contents of the canon a perpetual modernity." One paradigm is Jewish scriptural commentary, and "it is as inapposite to say of someone's canon that it is irrelevant because written by white males as to say that Hebrew Bible is irrelevant because it was written by ancient Jews."

Thus (3) a canon, and only a canon, ensures a tradition of "the special forms of attention" its contents require. Kermode aptly cites Alvin Kibel: there are great works, like Newton's *Optics*, of which "the text can be otherwise formulated"; there are also great works (Plato, St. Mark, Shakespeare) "to which textual reference is always necessary," because they are "a continual source of meaning."

(4) There is "no such necessary association between canons and political oppression as it now appears common to assume." Thus in America the "academic" canon was developed "in departments whose first objective was to give immigrants a better command of English."

Finally, (5) "the false notion of aesthetic totalities" is not pertinent to the existence of a canon. That "a total and definitive statement of the relation of any text to a totality of texts" is simply not possible need embarrass no one. It never embarrassed the rabbis; indeed it was "the" basis of their whole enterprise." For "partial and temporary successes are all that could ever be expected, which is why interpretation is endless—why it can make sense to speak of texts as inexhaustible, and of the 'great' texts as calling for continued institutional inquiry."

At a lower level than Culler, de Man, or Derrida, we find political posturing, definable as a bid for group approval once a potent group can be located. Thus at one major university "the proper use of Shakespeare is to convey information, eternal truths perhaps, about the oppression of women in the seventeenth century." (I'll conceal the person that paraphrases, though the paraphrase seems to be accurate.) Next comes packaging: e.g., a book by Vincent B. Leitch, *American Literary Criticism from the Thirties to the Eighties*, which is organized by "schools"—Myth Criticism, Reader-Response Criticism, Deconstruction, Feminism, Black Aesthetics . . . and simply omits whoever doesn't fit. I'll pause to record two of Kermode's observations, that "Hugh Kenner, for instance, cannot be accommodated," and that neither can John Hollander, to whom *An Appetite for Poetry* is fitly dedicated.

Trust your own nose, ends the Prologue. Kermode has rightly trusted his. A discussion of the ten essays would entail another and very long review. I'm grateful for them, still more grateful for the Prologue they occasioned. The silence you'll be hearing next will likely be thunderous.

LIBERAL ARTS

BUT ISN'T A POODLE NAMED LACY JANE JUST ASKING FOR . . .

A courageous cat in Dora, Alabama, took a flying leap and sent a pit bull running when the latter tried to beat up a poodle. Teresa Harper's 4-year-old feline, Sparky, became a local hero after saving her owner's poodle, Lacy Jane, from the jaws of the dog. As the Associated Press reported the story, Harper let her dog out and seconds later heard a commotion. She rushed to the door and was paralyzed with fear when she saw Lacy Jane at the mercy of a stray pit bull. But Sparky, perched 10 feet above the fray, flew into action. "She made a flying leap, just as pretty as you please, and she landed right on that dog's head," said her owner. "She just clawed and scratched and clawed and scratched."

The pit bull ran for cover. "The poodle had a puncture wound on the right side," said Vicky Moorehead, an employee at the animal clinic where the poodle was taken. "It would have been killed if it hadn't been for that cat."

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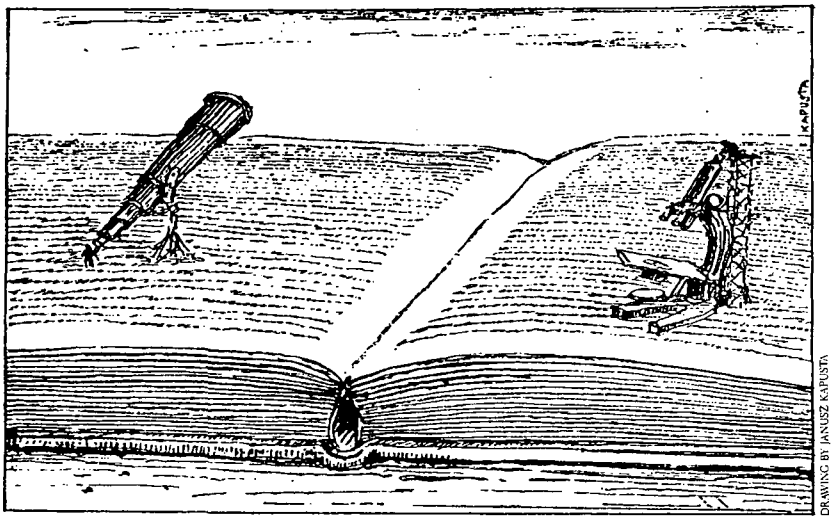
Space Art

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

"The land of the heart is the land of the West."



DRAWING BY JANUSZ KAPUSTA

New Ground: Western American Narrative and the Literary Canon
by A. Carl Bredahl
Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press; 192 pp., $24.95

◆

Catholic readers of American literature have always recognized that the difference between Eastern and Western fiction is the difference between New Canaan, Connecticut, and Tuba City, Arizona. A. Carl Bredahl's book is a comprehensive as well as original attempt at defining the nature of that difference, which has appeared so obvious as to require no definition at all.

Professor Bredahl states his thesis forthrightly: "[M]y argument . . . is that the effort to stretch language, subject, and form characterize many of the works created by America's western writers. As individuals who value surface, these writers create works that offer a corrective and a balance to postmodern despair. If we mistakenly assume that the traditional canon, as maintained in college reading lists and anthologies from the major eastern publishers, fully describes the American imagination, we miss a significant aspect of our culture"—as represented by such writers as Mary Austin, Sherwood Andersen, Ernest Hemingway, A.B. Guthrie, Jr., Walter Van Tilburg Clark, Harvey Fergusson, Wright Morris, and Ivan Deig. The extent to which these artists have been neglected or condescended to by the sodality exactly measures the degree to which American academics have yet to discover America.

The American literary tradition—"Edenic in the South, nationalistic in the North"—is signally concerned with questions of "enclosure"—that is to say, with "the problems and possibilities inherent in the act of intellectually enclosing wilderness." Charles Olsen, in *Call Me Ishmael* (1947), began with the statement: "I take SPACE to be the central fact to man born in America, from Folsom cave to now. I spell it large because it comes large here, Large, and without mercy." In spite—or perhaps because of—that fact, American writers (Bredahl claims) historically have been distrustful of space, made nervous by the continental wilderness lying about and beyond them. The act of literary enclosure has served as their defense against that wilderness, using mind to wall off ideas and social institutions transplanted from the Old World against threatening New World forces: "While a troubled fascination with enclosure generated many of America's greatest works, its assumptions came so to dominate our expectations that we frequently fail to appreciate literary expressions that do not define themselves through enclosure. These other works, it seems to me, develop out of fascination rather than discomfort with space and therefore present significantly different narrative and structural demands."

Although the Southern tradition in American letters has usually been regarded as the representation of physicality over intellect, and nature over urbanization, Bredahl makes the case for both Northern *and* Southern literature holding in common the idea of the New World as a "physical and spiritual haven" in which Old World ideas on the one hand, and gentility on the other, require defense against native chaos. It was only with the settlement of the Great Plains and, later, of

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Chilton Williamson, Jr. is the senior editor for books at Chronicles. *His latest novel,* Homestead, *will be published by Grove Weidenfeld in March.*

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the Far West that these habits of enclosure were broken by the new kind of writer which that settlement produced. "Confronting an environment of extravagant size, weather, and configuration, the western imagination had to discard assumptions of imposing self and enclosing landscape, efforts that in the West met inevitably with disaster."

Having laid the theoretical ground of his argument, Bredahl proceeds to demonstrate how Midwestern and Western writers like Hemingway, Anderson, Hamlin Garland, Willa Cather, Carl Sandburg, and Ole Rolvaag display in their works their fascination with the space in which they grew up and which they do not therefore find intimidating: also how, like the writer and adventurer Lewis Garrard (*Wah-te-yah and the Taos Trail*, 1850), they are open to the experience of a world that they are prepared to accept on its own terms, without the interposition of Old World perceptions. If Ernest Hemingway is sneered at in the purviews of contemporary Eastern criticism and of the academy, it is, Bredahl suggests, because he is (and has been for years) widely regarded as something he was *not*—namely, a writer of loss and of the Lost Generation—rather than recognized for what he *was*: a writer who explored, as Nick Adams does in *In Our Time*, the possibility for possibilities beyond the old cultural confines, and whose *A Farewell to Arms* may (perhaps should) be read as quite literally a pretext for the last paragraph, in which Frederic Henry walks away in the rain to begin a new life. In the works of Hemingway, as in these of his regional *confrères*, there is no tension between structure and wilderness, but a strong inclination to move away from, or beyond, that tension.

The chapter on Anderson and Mary Austin, followed immediately by that on Hemingway, triggered the question for me: are we talking about Westernism here, or about modernism? Did these Midwestern and Western writers of the early 20th century invent an approach to writing that seemed briefly to be the inevitable future way but that was shortly abandoned by their (mainly Eastern) successors in favor of a much more self-consciously intellectual, cosmopolitan, and politicized alternative?

It seems to me that there is much evidence to support this conclusion. An important component of literary modernism was the determination to cut through the artificialities and encumbrances of civilization to more primitive values and states of mind than had (presumably) prevailed in Western culture for some hundreds of years; and thus to liberate the artist from illusions of spirituality fostered by organized religion, while renewing his sense of himself as a creature wholly belonging to the natural world. Similarly, "In the western or midwestern imagination" (according to Bredahl) "one must begin with the physical because the body is not seen as a corpus, a container for an essential spirit, but as a locus, the matrix of life." In his brilliant discussion of *Green Hills of Africa*, Bredahl invites us to observe how "[t]he narrator cuts loose from enclosures that separate an individual from his environment and seeks to grow with those patterns inherent in the natural world." And, after noting that "It is finished" is the book's first spoken line of text, Bredahl remarks significantly that these words are "general enough to permit reference to more than just the hunt or the engine of Kandinsky's truck. Also finished is a way of life, one that is *intellectual, European, and Christian*." (My italics).

Repeatedly in his explication of these selected Western stories, Bredahl insists upon their essential paganism, their uninterest in ideas, their essential materialism. "Breaking through artificial, enclosing constructs and establishing contact with the energy of living processes is the story of western and mid-western writers," he says. " . . . An easterner might tell a similar story [similar, that is, to that of Guthrie's *The Big Sky*] but his would be one of conflicting ideas. . . . [Doig] is not writing a history, trying to get his facts correct; nor is he trying to transcend the physical world through the symbol. Instead, Doig's world has solidity, as conveyed by verbs that appeal to the senses . . . and by descriptions that make nature an active, physical force . . . " while Harvey Fergusson's *The Conquest of Don Pedro* is centrally informed by "the discovery that space and the rhythms of the natural world are more demanding than the desire to enclose and seek protection from change."

Professor Bredahl, it seems to me, has done an admirable job in pointing up the tremendous strengths inherent in Western American literature, while paradoxically failing to recognize—and, therefore, to suggest—how it has yet to fulfill its potential. The South achieved letters after losing a war, and doubtless the future holds in store tragedies and dislocations for this newest, freshest, and most innocent portion of the Republic's anatomy that will eventually instill in it a commensurate sense of loss and thus serve to deepen its literary expression. More importantly, though, it is necessary for Western literature to work itself out of that superficial naturalism inherited from its modernist infancy. The American West, whose immense and surreal landforms are the geologic approximation of eternity, provides the artist with the ideal backdrop to the puny but spiritually significant activities of its few and sparsely arranged human groupings. It is possessed of an as yet largely ignored poetic structure that recedes indefinitely before the viewer, as far and farther than the farthest-seeing eye can see. The South found its truest poet only decades ago, in the person of Flannery O'Connor; but then, as the old woman remarks of the monks of old to Mr. Shiftlet in "The Life You Save May Be Your Own," "They wasn't as advanced as we are." We in the West will find, I venture to guess, our own true poet soon enough.

LIBERAL ARTS

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Bork v. *Bork*

by Michael Lind

Tempting America: The Political Seduction of the Law
by Robert H. Bork
New York: The Free Press;
432 pp., $22.50

Battle for Justice: How the Bork Nomination Shook America
by Ethan Bronner
New York: W.W. Norton & Co.;
399 pp., $22.50

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Two of the most vilified judges in US history have probably been Judge Robert H. Bork and Chief Justice Roger Taney. Both gained notoriety early in their appointments by demonstrating their willingness to fire opponents of a domineering President's policy (Taney, when in the Jackson administration, fired directors of the Bank of the United States who resisted Jackson's unconstitutional withdrawals, and Bork, as solicitor general, acted as Nixon's agent in the Saturday Night Massacre). Both went on to judicial careers in which their adherence to the same theory—original intent—led demagogic politicians (Abraham Lincoln, Edward Kennedy) to defame them as little less than demons in black robes. "Nothing personal," as Kennedy told Bork.

Justice Taney would probably have little sympathy for Bork, who attacks his *Dred Scott* decision as an example of judicial activism (rather than the exercise in original-intent jurisprudence Taney believed it to be). However, Taney would have recognized the techniques that liberals used as part of their successful effort to defeat President Reagan's nomination of Bork to the Supreme Court. Kennedy's infamous speech—"Robert Bork's America is a land in which women would be forced into back alley abortions, blacks would sit at segregated lunch counters, rogue police could break down citizens' doors in midnight raids"—set the tone for the liberal smear campaign that followed.

The story is best told in Ethan Bronner's *Battle for Justice*, a breezy journalistic account of the political maneuvers that led to the defeat of the Bork nomination. Bronner's chief revelation is that Bork dug his own grave in his confirmation hearings, confusing the right and unnecessarily horrifying the left.

The right could only be perplexed by the way that Bork, who had once said, "An originalist judge would have no problem whatever in overruling a non-originalist precedent because that precedent, by the very basis of his judicial philosophy, has no legitimacy," promised at the hearings not to seek to overturn *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, the 1954 desegregation decision, a classical piece of judicial activism in defiance of original intent. Such "confirmation conversions" might have been forgiveable if they had helped him get onto the Court. Bork himself, however, seemed to live up to the liberal caricature of him as an insensitive monster. As a federal judge, he had ruled in favor of a chemical company that had allowed female workers to keep their jobs in a toxic environment only if they agreed to be sterilized. Grilled, Bork told the Senate, "I suppose the five women who chose to stay on that job with higher pay and chose sterilization—I suppose that they were glad to have the choice—they apparently were—that the company gave them." One of the women in question informed the committee that supervisors and fellow workers "referred to us like animals, such as dogs being spayed and neutered. They told us we were branded for life." Bork admires Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, who, admonished to "Do justice," replied, "That is not my job. It is my job to apply the law." Even so, Bork's argument that sometimes agonizing decisions are necessary, if judges are to interpret rather than make law, might have been more compelling if he had appeared agonized.

Not surprisingly, Bork's own account of his ordeal in the final part of *Tempting America* is distant and less informative than Bronner's account. Bork's critique of judicial activism, however, is much more rewarding. As a theorist, Bork resembles the hedgehog of Archilochus, who knew only one thing, but a very big thing. The big thing that Bork knows is that legislatures, not judges, should make laws.

"The clash over my nomination," Bork writes, "was simply one battle in [a] long-running war for control of our legal culture," in which judicial activists believe that constitutions and statutes "are malleable texts that judges may rewrite to see that particular groups or political causes win." Where a judge gives in to the temptation to enact his own views of justice instead of what the law requires, "A judge has begun to rule where a legislator should." Gibbon put it more memorably: "The discretion of the judge is the first engine of tyranny."

After giving a history of judicial activism from the early days of the Republic through the "constitutional revolution" of the New Deal and the Warren Court, Bork, a former Yale law professor, takes the lamp of Diogenes into the carnival-tent of legal theories that attempt to justify judicial activism. He not only fails to find an honest man but condemns the whole edifice as a firetrap. He is just as critical of conservative and libertarian advocates of judicial activism, such as Chicago's Richard Epstein, as of their more numerous liberal colleagues, such as Stanford's John Hart Ely and Bork's late friend and colleague at Yale, Alexander Bickel.

While Bork the critic of judicial lawmaking is rigorous and persuasive, Bork the legal theorist leaves something to be desired. Bork's own view of the legitimate guides to the "original meaning" of constitutional provisions

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would reduce judicial discretion, but not much. The search for original meaning can lead to "the constitutional text, records of the Philadelphia convention, records of ratifying conventions, the newspaper accounts of the day, the Federalist Papers, the Anti-Federalist Papers," as well as legislative and executive constructions, early treatises, "the structure of the document and the government it created" and—we're still not finished—the need to avoid "[r]esults that are particularly awkward." This is not a method of construction, it is an explosion in a library. Is a conflict between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists over federalism to be resolved by reference to a Philadelphia gazette of 1787, or by an analysis of the structure of the US government? Using this catholic version of original meaning, a clever Borkian judge could probably arrive at any results he chose.

So fond is Bork of extrinsic evidence of legislative intent that he would have judges refuse to enforce laws that come without How-To manuals for their application. He derides the Fourteenth Amendment's "privileges and immunities" clause as "an ink blot" and "a dead letter" because no one is sure exactly what its drafters intended. "There being nothing to work with, the judge should refrain from working." The idea that a judge should refuse to enforce a law merely because of a lack of legislative history is alien to the Anglo-American legal tradition. Indeed, the legal historian H. Jefferson Powell recently demonstrated that the Framers for the most part rejected reliance on external evidence of the drafter's or ratifier's intent, seeking to find intent in the text itself. If Bork's theory were adopted, then the lapidary phrasing of not only the Constitution, but most federal and state laws, would force judges to go on strike.

Bork himself violates his weird and novel rule when he suggests that the Supreme Court should have struck down Tennessee's apportionment law in *Baker* v. *Carr* (1962) under the mysterious constitutional clause guaranteeing "every State in the Union a Republican Form of Government." Although the Supreme Court has never struck down a law under this provision, "*Baker* v. *Carr* was a case in which the guarantee clause should

have been applied, precisely because a situation in which the majority is systematically prevented from governing is not what the Founders meant by a republican form of government." How does Bork know? Has he forgotten the slave states? Or Rhode Island, which until the 1840's permitted only eldest sons of landowners to vote? Or the republics of Switzerland, the Netherlands, Venice, Lombardy, and Greece? Why is the Fourteenth Amendment's privilege and immunities clause "a dead letter," but not the republican guaranty clause?

Another example illustrates the now-you-see-it-now-you-don't nature of Bork's fidelity to original meaning. In *Meyer* v. *Nebraska* (1923) the Supreme Court struck down a Nebraska law making it a crime to teach a foreign language to a child who had not passed the eighth grade, while two years later in *Pierce* v. *Society of Sisters* the Court invalidated an Oregon law making public school attendance until the eighth grade compulsory. In each case the Court struck down the state laws because they offended "substantive due process" (that is, natural justice, as divined by the Supreme Court).

Instead of finding judicial restraint appropriate in these circumstances, Bork agrees with the results, and suggests alternate rationales that are scarcely less dubious than substantive due process. According to Bork, the Court should have struck down the Nebraska law in *Meyer* as a violation of the First Amendment because "learning German . . . was thought by the state to pose the danger of the inculcation of foreign ideas contrary to the best interests of the United States." The compulsory public education law, Bork suggests, violated not only the free speech clause but the "free exercise of religion" clause of the First Amendment, because the Oregon statute "was largely the product of anti-Catholic prejudice."

The same Bork who elsewhere in the book writes, "The actual Constitution does not forbid every ghastly hypothetical law," shrinks from the logic of his position when he confronts ghastly actual laws. Bork would have severely criticized the First Amendment arguments against the state laws in *Meyer* and *Pierce*, one suspects, if someone else had made them. Can a state have no other reason for censorship to forbid bilingual education in early grades? Why is compulsory public school attendance a violation of the free exercise clause, but not compulsory taxation to support public schools? To compound the irony, the Supreme Court, in order to abide by Bork's theories, would have had to conclude that the First Amendment had been applied to the states as well as the federal government by "incorporation" in the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868. The "incorporation" doctrine was not even invented until the 1940's, and Bork himself criticizes it because it "enormously expanded the Court's power over the states."

From this kind of judicial restraint the liberals have little to fear. Bork, moreover, is opposed to overruling many mistaken liberal judicial decisions. "Thus, it is too late to overrule . . . those decisions validating certain New Deal and Great Society programs pursuant to the congressional powers over commerce, taxation, and spending. To overturn these would be to overturn most of modern government and plunge us into chaos." However, "it was never too late to overrule" 19th- and early 20th-century cases shielding business from government regulation, "because they were unjustifiable restrictions on government power." Rest in peace, Franklin and Lyndon: "There are times when we cannot recover the transgressions of the past, when the best we can do is say to the Court, 'Go and sin no more.'"

The argument that overturning established but mistaken precedents

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would create "chaos" in the welfare state is no more compelling than the statement of the scholar who, though correct, had lost an argument with a Roman emperor: "I am not ashamed to be confuted by the master of fifty legions." When a conservative Supreme Court held that a national income tax was unconstitutional, the American people in 1913 ratified the Sixteenth Amendment. Why should they be denied a similar chance to constitutionalize — or reject — the shaky underpinnings of the welfare state?

Curiously, Bork — the obedient agent of Nixon's Saturday Night Massacre — does not discuss two outrageous pieces of judicial activism, *Myers* v. *United States* (1926) and *Curtiss-Wright* (1936), which, although neither can be squared with "original meaning," are today used by Republican Presidents to justify the extension of arbitrary presidential power over federal agencies and foreign policy. One gathers that these "transgressions of the past," too, would be forgiven; insistence on "original meaning" might constrain a Haldeman, an Erlichman, or an Ollie North.

The examples Bork gives of his method, then, suggest that he would have been inconsistent in applying it. Even so, his approach is an immense improvement on the even less principled practices he criticizes. If we ever reach the point at which the excessive flexibility of Bork's originalism is the major problem with the judiciary, we will have ample reason to be grateful — and we will have Bork the critic of judicial activism largely to thank.

Michael Lind writes from Washington.

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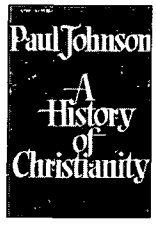

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Not Simply Black and White

by Allan C. Brownfeld

Prisoners of a Dream: The South African Mirage
by Leo Raditsa
Annapolis: Prince George Street Press;
467 pp., $25.95

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When the South African government was committed to perpetuating apartheid into the future, there were few in the West calling for economic sanctions. Only as South Africa has embarked upon reform — an end to the pass laws; an end to bans on black workers joining labor unions; integration of sports, hotels, restaurants — has such a campaign been mounted. Indeed, the *Johannesburg Sunday Times*, a sharp critic of apartheid, asked in a 1985 editorial: "How has it happened that, at a time when serious reform is finally being introduced in South Africa, the country is facing a rising crescendo of overseas criticism, and economic sanctions have been introduced by America? . . . Perhaps it is because reform is seen by the well-organized anti-apartheid lobby round the world as a threat to its existence? Perhaps the whole campaign is [sic] more to do with America's internal political maneuvering. . . . Whatever the reasons, it remains a fact that reformist South Africa is facing a barrage of criticism and activist opposition as great, if not greater, than at any time during Nationalism's three-decade march through the age of apartheid." A larger reason for the anti-South Africa campaign at the present time, so Professor Leo Raditsa argues in this thoughtful and comprehensive book, is that the African National Congress (ANC) and its militant allies fear that democratic reform will succeed in transforming South Africa into a genuinely equitable society before they have the chance to impose a totalitarian, Marxist-Leninist regime upon the country along the lines of Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Angola.

What first attracted Leo Raditsa, a member of the faculty of St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, to the subject were five days of hearings in March 1982 conducted by the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Senate Judiciary Committee, chaired by Senator Jeremiah Denton (R-AL) and devoted to the question of "The Role of the Soviet Union, Cuba, and East Germany in Fomenting Terrorism in Southern Africa." Nine witnesses appeared, all black Africans, most of them former members of the ANC or the South West Africa Peoples Organization (SWAPO); their testimony and the accompanying documents make it clear that, in Dr. Raditsa's words, "The ANC, SWAPO, the South African Communist Party [SACP] and the other terrorist organizations, and the Soviet and Eastern European agents active in southern Africa, dread most of all rebellions and defiant but politically innocent blacks caught in their organizations who want change and transformation but not the destruction of the South African government. They show that these terrorist organizations will do anything to break these blacks who love their country and their parents."

All available evidence, Raditsa points out, shows that the ANC is clearly a Marxist-Leninist group that is financed, supplied, and trained by the Soviet Union and its satellite states. The ANC is in close alliance with the SACP, which is largely white. In an article entitled "The Two Pillars of Our Struggle: Reflections on the Relationship Between the ANC and the SACP," Sol Dubla, writing in *The African Communist*, notes that, "Today the ANC and the SACP are embraced in the common front of liberation." Dr. Yussuf Dadoo served as both chairman of the SACP and chairman of the ANC National Executive Committee.

And the same is true of SWAPO. Moscow hopes to achieve the communization of Namibia, Raditsa argues, though this terrorist group whose leader, Sam Nujoma, has expressed contempt for free elections, declaring that SWAPO seeks only to come to power. He openly declares: "SWAPO will establish political connections with all the countries who wish to do so, but above all with friendly countries, such as the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic." And under SWAPO, he has pledged, free enter-

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prise will come to an end.

The report issued by the Senate committee after the 1982 hearings declared that, "Documents submitted for the record contain evidence of the training of large numbers of SWAPO's 'cadres' in the Soviet Union, both in military doctrines and, without exception, in Marxist-Leninist ideology. The position of 'political comissar' is entrenched at all organizational levels of SWAPO. These men . . . are trained at the KOMSOL Party School in the Soviet Union, in the GDR and in Cuba." In testimony which Raditsa found particularly compelling, Bartholomew Hlapane, a former member of the Central Committee of the SACP and the National Executive Committee of the ANC, declared: "No major decision could be taken by the ANC without the concurrence and approval of the Central Committee of the SACP. Most major developments were in fact initiated by the Central Committee."

Mr. Hlapane testified that, "The military wing of the ANC, also known as Umkhonto We Sizwe, was the brainchild of the SACP." The sole source of funds for the ANC's military activities, he added, was the Communist Party itself, during the period that he acted as treasurer of the SACP. Other witnesses before the Senate indicated that, as members of the ANC, they had received military and political training in Angola and East Germany, as well as in the Soviet Union. Shortly after the Senate published its report on Soviet support for terrorism in South Africa (a campaign aimed largely at moderate blacks who seek peaceful reform, not at the government), Senator Jeremiah Denton reported to his colleagues as follows (June 20, 1983): "I had the painful duty of informing the Senate that one of the witnesses, Mr. Bartholomew Hlapane, and his wife were murdered in their home in Soweto on December 16, 1982, by an ANC assassin armed with an AK-47 assault rifle."

As South Africa moved in the direction of further internal reform and better relations with its neighbors, the ANC increased its terrorist activities. Speaking on April 13, 1986, Winnie Mandela, wife of imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela, declared: "With our boxes of matches and our necklaces, we shall liberate this country." The "necklace" referred to is a gasoline-filled tire placed around a victim's neck and set on fire. This method of "execution" has been used by ANC activists—not against white South Africans, but against blacks who seek peaceful reform.

Leo Raditsa laments that, while all of the evidence shows that the ANC does not want to share power with whites but seeks to take over South Africa by violent means, and that it is opposed by the vast majority of black South Africans, the American media has almost totally ignored this reality.

This is a powerful and well-documented look at what is really taking place in South Africa at the present time. It deserves to receive more attention than the hearings which motivated it.

Allan C. Brownfeld is a syndicated columnist and an associate of the Accuracy in Media—Allied Educational Foundation Speakers Bureau in Washington.

The Critic and the Conservative Imagination

by M.E. Bradford

Acts of Recovery
by Jeffrey Hart
Hanover and London: University Press of New England; 256 pp., $19.95

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Because of the great range of his interests, it is very difficult to predict what Professor Jeffrey Hart will next produce. Hart writes out of a devotion to literature as "the principal vehicle for transmitting the ideas and feelings that constitute our shared public culture." Following the examples of public-spirited critics running from Samuel Johnson and Matthew Arnold to T.S. Eliot and Lionel Trilling, Professor Hart explicitly rejects the coterie culture of deconstruction and the new literary history that make of the critic a hierophant occupied in the unfolding of mysteries or a tasteless malcontent mired in endless accusations. "The assumption throughout [these] essays is that the study of literature is central to our discourse and that the habits of mind generated by the study and discussion of literature can be applied to a wide range of subject matter": that the literary education is the best possible preparation for the study of the culture at large. But not if we neglect that part which is specifically literary. Hart has not done this. He writes well about George Herbert, about the poetry of Frost and Eliot and the fiction of the Spanish novelist José Maria Gironella. He does formal explication as I was taught to understand that enterprise and also, in an essay on Boswell and Johnson, traditional literary history. We can look forward to a Hart monograph on Hemingway and Fitzgerald from the University of Missouri Press.

Out of such grounding, on the basis of so various a literary education, it is not surprising that Hart as a man of letters in the antique sense of that term has followed closely and perceptively developments in political and social theory, in the sociology of knowledge, theology, poetics, and in the art where all of these concerns meet and resolve, rhetoric. For he needs all of these competencies to translate form into the language of our time. Nor is it surprising that he has written speeches for the campaigns of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. Indeed, all of the lines of inquiry that gather in the thought of Jeff Hart combine and reinforce one another in *Acts of Recovery*.

The prototype for this book is *The Liberal Imagination* (1950) of Hart's immediate preceptor in the business of criticism, Professor Lionel Trilling of Columbia University, whom Hart honors in his preface. But the distance between Hart and Trilling is more instructive than their connection—a distance of which Hart speaks when he describes his book as essays that "represent an attempt to push beyond Trilling's hesitation and doubts to explore the possibility that there really is a wider and deeper tradition than what Trilling believed in 1950 to be 'our sole intellectual tradition'" (i.e., naturalism and/or positivism). Because it is even more radically skeptical than Trilling's modernism, because it doubts the usually unchallenged assumptions of the left as much as it does older attitudes that have lost their vitality in thought-

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less repetition, the conservative imagination as recommended in Hart's example is not at all ideological.

Hart cannot invest too many of his hopes for a civilized future in what the universities may achieve. On this point he quarrels with Allan Bloom, who is too much a man of the Enlightenment to be a conservative. He reasons, rather, the other way around, that the most important things may have to be written and circulated outside "the regular channels for orderly intellectual exchange"—as with Belloc, with Lewis as apologist, Chesterton, and Kendall.

For the way in which intellectual fashions develop and ideas achieve currency has, as he describes the process in *Ideas in Culture*, very little to do with their intrinsic or intellectual substance—their ability to survive a rigorous critical examination. Furthermore, the regnant metaphors functioning in a universe of discourses may tell us more about what thinking that context will allow than the discursive achievement of its philosophers. Even so, with or without a push from the academy, the intellectual habits that have dominated most Western thought since the Renaissance are rapidly losing their authority and momentum. Jeff Hart points in support of his analysis to the conclusion of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* as demonstrating that modern rationalism is a doctrine now surviving only by default. Other evidence to the same effect which he discusses appears in the recent history of those New York intellectuals who once trusted the sanguine promise of socialism. Their biographies are beginning to appear, and the unexpected finding of this generation is that the old authorities have turned out to be the best: that we are, as we were told, circumscribed by links and derivations, by patrimony and the huge skein of an *a priori* social matrix; that geographical placing signifies that with our "given" identity we require for our guidance, at a minimum, revealed truth and a full knowledge of history, not dialectics or abstract principles.

I might say more about Professor Hart's felicity, both his ability to speak always as himself in a voice that is both serious and ironic, genial and amused: a *conversational* voice that attempts to close a few questions, to silence few adversaries (except for dogmatism), but which nonetheless lives up to his stated definition of the critic's task—to be "the best reader of a poem or prose work that erudition and native intelligence can produce." I might further sound a note of impatience with Hart on pornography. Though he is probably correct in his assumptions about the *Realpolitik* of the question as it operates presently in American law and culture, however strong the trends in motion in our world, it continues to be true that what becomes of a society depends upon the care with which it protects the physical dignity of its women—*whether they want that protection or not.*

But this is to cavil at one chapter in 21 that stand well together in a splendid book. Instead I will conclude with Hart on Spain and the literature of the Spanish Civil War. In his essays on Hemingway, Gironella, and recent historians of Spain one finds texts read carefully within the widest possible tangle of reference. Moreover, these are commentaries untroubled by the mythic passion of the left for this particular war.

No American critic writes better of this material in the context to which it rightfully belongs.

M.E. Bradford is a professor of English at the University of Dallas.

Two Countries, Two Cultures

by George Carey

Autobiographical Reflections
by Eric Voegelin
Edited and introduced by
Ellis Sandoz
Baton Rouge and London:
Louisiana State
University Press;
123 pp., $16.95

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The publication of Eric Voegelin's *Autobiographical Reflections* is a small but highly significant step in an enormous project that has been undertaken by the Louisiana State University Press, the publication of his collected works. The editors estimate that, in all, this project will run to 34 volumes, at least 15 of which will include heretofore unpublished materials.

Reflections is the outgrowth of Ellis Sandoz's research for his book, *The Voegelin Revolution: A Biographical Introduction* (LSU Press, 1981). It consists of Voegelin's transcribed responses to queries put to him in the summer of 1973 by Sandoz; queries that center on the major events of Voegelin's life, as well as on the course of his intellectual development. For this reason, there is a considerable overlap between *Reflections* and *The Voegelin Revolution*; that is, a good deal of what we find in *Reflections* concerning major components of and developments in Voegelin's approach—e.g., his theory of consciousness, the sources and nature of gnosticism in the modern world, the need for openness to the whole—is also found in *The Voegelin Revolution*, frequently in the form of a direct quotation from these interviews. Sandoz's book, however, also provides an extremely coherent and lucid overview of Voegelin's approach and findings. For those approaching Voegelin for the first time, or even for those who are familiar with his work but who lack a comprehensive knowledge of his methods and concerns, *Reflections* by itself is not a good starting point. It should be read in conjunction with *The Voegelin Revolution* so that Voegelin's concerns, observations, and refinements can be appreciated in the context of his major works.

This does not mean that new and original material is not to be found in *Reflections*. The major contribution of this book, and what renders it most appropriate as the prelude to his collected works, is the insights it provides us into Eric Voegelin as a human being. Many of these insights we glean indirectly from his reflections about the state of the world and society he sees about him. In this respect most readers are bound to find his observations about the United States of particular interest, if only because the two years (1924-25) he spent as a young student in this country at Columbia, Harvard, and Wisconsin had such a profound impact on his thinking. In his words, "There was the strong background of Christianity and Classical culture [in the United States] that was so signally fading out, if not missing, in

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the methodological debates in which I had grown up as a student. In brief, there was a world in which this other world in which I had grown up was intellectually, morally, and spiritually irrelevant."

One can see that Voegelin had a genuine affection for the America that uniquely reflected this Christian and classical culture: the commonsense America unpolluted by ideology. For this reason, he was far more at home in the South than the Northeast. Indeed, during his teaching stint at Bennington, shortly after his emigration to the United States in 1938, he observed that the "leftist element"—"Communists among the faculty and still more among the students"—had created an "environment . . . no more to my taste than the National Socialist environment that I just had left." He is outspoken about "the ideological corruption of the East Coast" that he observed; a corruption so profound that some students would on occasion "betray the behavioral characteristics of totalitarian aggressiveness." By contrast, he found the students at LSU, where he taught from 1942 to 1958, to be refreshingly "open-minded." They "did not have the knowledge one would expect of European students," but they nevertheless "had . . . something that the European, especially the German, students usually lack—a tradition of common-sense culture."

Voegelin's contempt for ideology and ideologists is manifest in these pages, and therefore it seems the height of irony that various critics have accused him of being an ideologue, a captive of one "ism" or another—from communism to Nazism and just about everything in between. The charges, of course, are absurd. They are mindless retaliations leveled against him, we may surmise, because he was such an articulate and trenchant critic of the dominant intellectual climate in the academic world, particularly at our most prestigious universities. He speaks of "a massive social force of aggressive, intellectual dishonesty that penetrates the academic world"; of a "willful divorce from reality" that pervades our institutions of higher learning and poses a potential threat to democratic government.

Voegelin, at the end of the Vietnam era, could speak of a "contemporary spiritual turmoil" that produced a "divided society" that would, in due course, heal. This division, he felt, could be traced to influences on the intellectual community alien to the American political tradition. In this vein, he remarks upon the animosity of French and German intellectuals towards America: "such a revolution [as America's] should not be successful because the intellectuals want to make a revolution of their own in the tradition of the French destruction of cultural order."

Reflections, viewed as a whole, suggests that the distance between the commonsense America and its intellectual community is much wider and deeper than even Voegelin pictures it. That perhaps the most profound thinker of this century was, on the one hand, treated in a manner ranging from indifference to hostility by the major part of the intellectual community and, on the other, so much admired and appreciated by his students at LSU—the products of a tradition as yet uncorrupted by ideology—is one interesting measure of that gulf.

George Carey is a professor of government at Georgetown University.

Lost Horizon

by Mark Falcoff

Friends of Promise: Cyril Connolly and the World of Horizon
by Michael Selden
New York: Harper & Row; 254 pp., $24.95

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The 50th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II has occasioned an outpouring of nostalgic literature in Great Britain. The elegiac note may be appropriate: the year 1939 was, after all, a great point of rupture. Out went big houses, servants, elegant restaurants, and high fashion; in came universal military service, rationing, government canteens (euphemistically named "British restaurants"), and a general leveling-down of all personal, economic, and cultural styles. This was exactly the moment that two determined Englishmen chose for launching a highbrow review of arts and letters. The magazine was *Horizon*, and Michael Selden, a professor of English at Indiana State University, tells its story in *Friends of Promise*.

The men were Cyril Connolly, a talented literary journalist who up till then had never quite discovered his *métier*, and Peter Watson, a wealthy art collector and patron now separated from his beloved Paris and looking around for a way to recapture the spirit of Bohemia. *Horizon* was obviously the ideal vehicle for both. There was no competition for what they set out to do—indeed, several major literary reviews, including T.S. Eliot's *Criterion*, closed down in the first weeks of the war. Nor could the challenge have been greater: to justify high culture in wartime, at a time when anything "highbrow" ran the risk of being labeled "escapist." As Selden puts it compactly, "At *Horizon* it was Connolly's self-appointed duty to remind the country that the survival of its culture was threatened as much by philistines at home as by hostile armies overseas."

What an unlikely pair. The only thing Connolly and Watson had in common was self-indulgence. Connolly preferred beautiful women, expensive food and wine, and when he traveled, first-class accommodations. He continually lived beyond his means, usually by collecting advances on books he never wrote. (The American publisher Cass Canfield once called him "one of the most charmingly devious literary gentlemen not actually behind bars.") Watson's taste was for a luxury wholly prohibited in those days by British law—young men. He liked them American, predatory, and self-destructive, and he was rarely disappointed in his finds. Around these two characters revolved a group of devoted, self-effacing women *littérateurs*, including Sonia Browning ("the Euston Road Venus"), who married George Orwell on his deathbed, and Lys Lubbock, who shared Connolly's flat, bed, and eventually his name (she changed it by deed poll, a futile gesture which did not lead to marriage). Without Browning and Lubbock/Connolly there would have been no *Horizon* at all, since the editor had a tendency to fritter away his time, often outside the office.

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Nonetheless, when Connolly *did* focus on his task, he was unrivaled in his editorial judgment. *Horizon* was responsible for discovering George Orwell as a social critic, publishing his unconventional excursions into British popular culture. It also introduced British readers to Truman Capote, Mary McCarthy, Ignazio Silone, and Octavio Paz, among many others. In fact, the magazine's principal problem was never money, subscribers, or contributors—it was fabulously successful almost from the first issue—but paper, glue, and other materials, which were rationed according to a silly system which extrapolated from the amounts used by magazines before the war, when, of course, *Horizon* had not existed at all.

The issue of government interference in cultural life (even to the extent of rationing paper) is an interesting subtheme of this book that Selden might have developed a bit more explicitly. Like most British intellectuals of his generation, Connolly considered himself a man of the left, and favored, as a matter of principle, government funding of the arts. However, he had the good (or bad) fortune to start his magazine during World War II, when all of the collectivist impulses which had been kept at bay by British domestic politics in the 1930's were suddenly given license to overrun every quarter of national life. Connolly's first experience with public policymaking for the arts was thus wholly negative.

But things did not improve after the war, since the Labour government which came into office in 1945 prolonged rationing for six more years, and even extended it into new areas. For example, in 1947-48 the government banned the importation of foreign books. The ostensible reason was to save currency, but Connolly saw through the ruse; the Labour mandarins were offended, he observed, by "margins immorally wide and paper indecently thick." The postwar period saw the founding of the Arts Council of Great Britain, which coincided with (and no doubt to the extent that it could, promoted) a rapid decline of the quality of British writing and painting. Indeed, the appropriate cultural monument to the Atlee government is the ghastly "Festival of Britain" style.

Under these circumstances, Connolly and *Horizon* found themselves looking to America, where there were already more subscribers to the magazine than in Britain itself. By 1946 much of the most vigorous writing in the English language was being produced in the United States. In fact, Connolly's characterization of the British cultural scene is not wholly irrelevant forty years on:

> Here ego is at half-pressure; most of us are not men or women but members of a vast, seedy, overworked, overlegislated neuter class, with our drab clothes, our ration books and murder stories, our envious, stricken, old-world apathies and resentment—a careworn people.

Horizon could not, however, survive as a British literary review largely filled with contributions from American writers. In any event, Connolly was wearying of his task, and Watson was looking around for new ways to deploy his money and interests. Both were involved in new relationships which diverted their energies elsewhere—Connolly with Barbara Skelton, formerly mistress of King Farouk, Watson with a worthless American who fled London to be a bookstore clerk in Rio de Janeiro, condemning his lover to an expensive, lengthy commute. The magazine closed down in 1950, and its editor went back to literary journalism. His articles and reviews have since been collected in *Previous Convictions* (1963) and *The Evening Colonnade* (1973)—two books that are a source of continuing delight, revealing a first-class intelligence, and making us regret that *Horizon* could not have endured a decade or two more.

Michael Selden has written a wonderful book—claiming for his own the terrain formerly closed to Americans by the incestuous clique of British literary historians. It was with considerable interest that I read on the jacket that "he has been commissioned by the Estate of George Orwell to write Orwell's authorized biography."

Mark Falcoff is resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

The World Is Plenty

by J.O. Tate

Brighten the Corner Where You Are
by Fred Chappell
New York: St. Martin's Press; 212 pp., $15.95

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The last time we heard Jess Kirkman tell stories about his father's wondrous, humble life was in *I Am One of You Forever* (1985), a work of power and humor and charm. That book reminded me, however, that the word "novel" has hardly any meaning nowadays, for the work seemed a suite of stories united by a common narrator and single setting, but no more.

The distinction I am trying to make, if it is a legitimate one, is in no sense a deprecation of Fred Chappell's writing. I mean only to say that a suite is not a symphony, that *The Unvanquished* is not *Absalom, Absalom!* Of course I'd rather re-read *The Unvanquished* than any number of contemporary "novels." And I'm very glad I read both *I Am One of You Forever* and *Brighten the Corner Where You Are*, particularly so when I reflect upon the larger context of their publication. Fred Chappell writes with so much assurance and humor, he gives such delight and surprise, that he has distinguished himself among his peers as a fiction writer—never mind his even greater career as a poet. A look at what passes for fiction these days probably means Fred Chappell looks better than even he is. I mean, have you tried to read Mary Gordon's *The Other Side*, or aren't you tired of living yet?

To get down to cases, we have here a day in the life of Joe Robert Kirkman as told by his son, who in turn is barely a presence in his own narrative, though he is a knowing narrator for all that. The son is, like the father, a spinner of tall tales, one who lives in that world of the imagination in which we can talk to animals—and they can talk back. In that world anything can happen, and does. World and dream merge, and at the end Joe Robert is a giggling witness to his own dream. He declares, "All day long I have been trying to tell a lie and I haven't had even a whiff of

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success. It would be difficult for me to explain to you how nearly impossible it is to tell a lie. . . . Used to, I could tell a dozen lies before breakfast and not even break a sweat." There the text seems to allude to another in which a character famously declares, "Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast," and which finally and lyrically asks us, *Life, what is it but a dream?* Joe Robert Kirkman lives in a wonderland of his own perceptions, or of his own devising, or of his son's evocation—depending on how you look at it.

This world in which anything can happen must somehow also be one in which nothing and no one is to be taken for granted. The most mundane experience is of the earth, earthy, and partakes if not of the divine order, then of the pagan realm, before this world was desacralized:

> Now wasn't this the sweetest part of the day, milking the easy cows? Nudging head and shoulder into the comfortable flanks, washing the teats and squeezing them gently at first in case of soreness and gradually building into rhythm, stream after straight stream in a pulse as regular as the stately heart of the animal, bright jets of milk xing to fill the pail with warm lace, with delicate foam that touched his knuckles like a spiderweb. These days, these hours were of life the cream supreme . . .

But such a static moment is typical of this tale only in its lyricism. Most of Joe Robert's long Friday is rife with action, interaction, and reversals. When, at three in the morning, he attempts to intimidate his hunting companions with a tall tale about a devil-possum, he finds himself climbing a tree to go capture the thing. When he rescues a little girl from drowning, he is rewarded in a way he never conceived of. When, as a schoolteacher, he must confront the parents of a wounded veteran and former student, the result is not one he could have anticipated—or the reader either.

The "curious mixed-up day" includes episodes of instruction in "General Science," celebrations of Huxley and Darwin, defenses of academic freedom, memories of childhood conflicts with a tenant family, an encounter with a secret memorial for the victims of war, and a phantasmagoric run-in with a goat on a rooftop—one who makes some striking suggestions.

When the schoolteacher finally gets his class on a roll, his play-Socrates runs away with the day's lesson and makes mincemeat of that teacher's pretensions. Joe Robert's long-awaited confrontation with the school board becomes a nonevent, even a mystery. A journalist is the news she purports to transcribe. An innocent high-school student is not what she seems, not by a long shot.

Surrounded by wonders and dazzled by revelations, Joe Robert Kirkman may indeed be the Aeneas that he thinks his son sees him as. But if he is less than an epic hero, he is still a man who knows the world—"The world was plenty." That world is both natural and supernatural, a world of visions and dreams and flesh-made words. The world in its fullness of body and spirit is the world of Fred Chappell's fiction. The least we can say of it is that it's a world well worth living in while we recreate it by scanning the words it's made of. The most we can say of it is that if you can find better fiction this season, read that. If not—a big if—then read this.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

Good Lovers Are Dead Lovers

by Katherine Dalton

Charley Bland
by Mary Lee Settle
New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 207 pp., $18.95

◆

Charley Bland, as his father describes him, would have been a prodigal son except he never had the gumption to leave home. Still, he has the charm most lost souls have, and for the widowed, 35-year-old narrator of Mary Lee Settle's eleventh novel, returned home to West Virginia from a Bohemian life in Europe, this most eligible and most ineligible of bachelors becomes her reason to stay.

Living on what she can earn writing or tutoring French, hand to mouth in a part of the world and an era (late 50's-early 60's) in which money, heaven forbid poverty, cannot be discussed, she spends her time and energy and last bit of youth on this 40-plus bachelor who cannot make a man of himself. "[P]rofane love," she says, "is a place, an Eden, a prison. Within it, people glow, colors are bright, you believe everything you have always wanted to believe. It is a place of trust, of guilelessness and deep iridescent illusion. I think the snake that seduced Eve was not temptation but guile, for it was the one quality that could destroy her."

The narrator is a foreigner now in her own hometown even to the extent that she is always explaining to the reader, her confessor, the Southernisms in what was once, surely, her own English. At first an object of interest, she holds on to the favorite Charley Bland longer than is acceptable, and is dropped with that crushing Southern politeness that is without malice and without pity.

Like so many books about dead affairs, this one is also an exorcism. And like so many writers, especially women writers, Settle through the medium of her narrator wants to dissect the hows and the whys of a lost intensity. There is not much in the way of plot, but as an "In Memoriam" the novel works very

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—*from* Publishers Weekly, *October 6, 1989*

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well. We read a writer as much for what he sees and how he describes what he sees as for the story he has to tell, and Settle not only has a lucid style but a wonderful eye. She understands with perfect clarity the kind of strong-willed mother that makes for a weak-willed son. She understands, too, that this free-ranging bachelor is bound like a slave to home, and that his lover, caught up in something she knows to be hopeless, living in the wrong part of town, dropped by his crowd, the country club crowd, is the free one.

But freedom, like money, is not a good in itself; it's what you do with it that counts, and having spent so much of her life on bric-a-brac Charley Bland's lover finds that when this affair is over she is only free to leave. Freedom was never what she wanted anyway; it is only all she has left. As she packs her trailer for New York her friend Plain George tells her "'You'll be back before you know it,'" giving her "the only words of comfort he knew," the only words of comfort for an exile. Like so much of the (little enough) kindness that has been shown her, it is both a blessing and a lie.

Katherine Dalton is managing editor of Chronicles.

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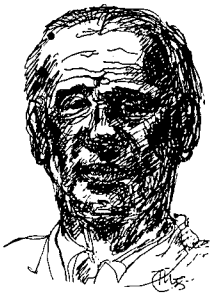

ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS!

According to so-called scientific polls designed and executed by the Gallup Organization and the Princeton Religious Research Center, the great majority of the American people continue to believe in the Millennium, even if a lesser majority—or perhaps actually a minority—don't know what it is.

The People's Religion: American Faith in the 90's (New York and London: Macmillan; 278 pp., $19.95) by George Gallup, Jr. and Jim Castelli, is full of interesting bits of information, not all of them depressing. We learn, for example, that as of 1982, 42 percent of Americans knew who delivered the Sermon on the Mount, while 46 percent could name all four gospels and a whopping 70 percent could say where Christ was born. On the other hand, as of 1954, those figures were 34, 35, and 75 percent, respectively, so that, in just less than thirty years, we've made progress: two steps forward and one step back.

The Gallup Organization has been around for half a century now, in which time, the authors assure us, the religious character of the nation has been—despite "volatility" and a steady decline in church attendance since the 1950's—what they call "stable." "Basic religious beliefs, and even religious practice, today differ relatively little from the levels recorded fifty years ago," when a Gallup survey found the Bible to be a close first in the home libraries of Americans, almost in a dead heat with *Gone With the Wind*. Somewhat to their surprise, apparently, Messrs. Gallup and Castelli can write that the American faith remains not just orthodox but even "fundamentalist" (their word), inasmuch as nine of ten Americans claim never to have doubted the existence of God; while eight in ten expect to have to account for their sins on Judgment Day, another eight in ten profess to believe that God still works miracles, and seven in ten believe in a life after death.

This information, of a kind likely to produce a chilling effect on Norman Lear, Arthur Kropp, and company over at People for the American Way, is positive so far as it goes. On the debit side, sentences like, "Americans are evenly divided on the statement, 'I don't have to belong to an organized religion because I lead a good life,'" and "only a large minority of Americans agree that there are clear standards for judging good and evil that never change," are followed by a section called "What Americans Want From Their Churches" that is—well, dispiriting. "Americans want a wide variety of services, both spiritual and practical, from their churches and synagogues," the authors claim. "And whether Americans feel they are getting these services is, all in all, a more important factor in determining whether or not they will attend church than are larger philosophic questions."

What Americans want, it seems, are a sense of community, an opportunity for direct involvement in the social issues of the day, and "practical help" in such matters as child rearing and "learning how to be parents," and they have made up their collective mind that the church of their choice is the natural provider of these things. (As one team of scholars, including Martin Marty, has noted, there is "[e]vidence of a tendency [for Americans] to view religion as useful for some personal or social end rather than as an expression of devotion to God alone; an increase in the concern for adjustment to this life, in contrast to preparing for life after death.") What Americans emphatically *don't* want from their churches, it seems, are hierarchy, discipline, or direction, whether of the institutional or the theological variety. As for interpreting the Word of God and applying that interpretation to personal and social behavior, they wish to be left alone to do their own thing (without benefit of clergy, past or present).

Preceding the Day of Judgment, God may perhaps feel Himself compelled to administer courses in Christian theology to the souls of American faithful that will make freshman catch-up classes at contemporary Yale and Harvard look like an old-fashioned Sunday School picnic. (CW)

DRAWINGS BY T. MCGEE

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Letter From Paris

by Curtis Cate

Modern Pyramids and Ancient Squares

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We were driving past the Pavillon de Flore, which punctuates the southwestern extremity of the Louvre's Grande Galerie, when my neighbor suddenly gripped my arm and exclaimed, "*Mira! Estos techos! estas chimineas! Hombre! Estupendo!*" (Look! Those roofs, those chimneys! Man alive! Stupendous!) Such was the reaction of the famous Spanish cartoonist, Antonio Mingote, to his first exposure to the Louvre, some twenty years or more ago.

For me this was both an exciting and sobering experience. Having lived for so many years in Paris, I had grown used to the tall chimneys and rooftops of the Louvre and had ended up taking them for granted. It had taken this visiting Spaniard to make me realize just how stupendous the Louvre's tall roofs, domed pavilions, and soaring chimneys really were.

In 1852, when Napoleon III decided to complete what his more illustrious uncle had already begun — by clearing three streets of run-down houses in order to connect the northern wing of the Tuileries Palace to the Louvre along the handsomely arcaded Rue de Rivoli — he entrusted this task of palatial enlargement to two conservative architects, Lodovico Visconti and Hector Lefuel, who today are virtually forgotten. Neither being a genius nor burning to be furiously "original," they prudently decided that the Louvre could best be aggrandized by the construction of two monumental, tall-roofed wings, complete with six magnificent domed pavilions, similar to those which the great Renaissance architect, Philibert Delorme, had designed for Catherine de Medicis' Tuileries Palace. They further decided to decorate the cornices with stone statues, representing French lawmakers and thinkers, painters, architects, and poets — in all, more than one hundred. When finally completed in 1857 the structure was considerably larger than Louis XIII's Cour de Marbre rose at Versailles, and notwithstanding its relative lack of architectural originality it was the most palatial and grandest forecourt in the world.

Up until fairly recently this magnificent forecourt served as a daytime parking lot for museum curators and senior officials from the French Ministry of Finance, located in the northern wing of the Louvre. The forecourt, now known as the Cour Napoléon, was further disgraced by clumps of trees and bushes and an incongruously placed statue of Lafayette. But a few years ago all the cars were ordered out, the trees and the statue were removed. The result, particularly impressive in the evening, was a wonderfully lamp-lit square, dominated by the brooding domes and the soundless voices of its lordly statues, which seemed to be conversing with each other or with the wandering visitor below. Nowhere in the French capital was the rich continuity of French history so grandly and eloquently evoked as here.

Today, however, the magic spell has been broken. The ghosts of the past no longer flit across the square, the statues no longer converse. For the huge forecourt (120 yards wide, 250 yards deep) is now partly filled by a strange glass tent, held together by metal struts and ribbing, which destroys the *vue d'ensemble* one used to have, and makes the stately square almost carnivalesque. The jarring 20th-century intruder is the famous 70-foot-high glass pyramid designed by a Chinese-American architect, I.M. Pei. The pyramid "shelters" a circular entrance ramp leading down to an "enchanted" underworld of ticket-dispensing counters, information desks, bookshops, a bank, post-office, restaurant, and cafeteria — from which throbbing concourse, effortlessly borne upwards again on three escalating carpets, the perfectly oriented and possibly "tanked-up" sightseer can now penetrate the labyrinthine galleries of the "Grand Louvre."

Exactly what kind of verdict historians of the future will pass on this less-than-crystalline excrescence when they chronicle the second seven-year reign of François II, I have no idea. But they are likely to conclude that the manner in which this pyramid was chosen and then imposed on a passive, willingly bamboozled French public was a masterful exhibition of manipulation, pulled off by someone who has few equals in the art of transmuting an autocratic *vox Dei* into a seemingly democratic *vox populi*.

In the "precedent" of that tubular monstrosity known as the Centre Georges Pompidou (or "Centre Beauborg"), competing designs were solicited and some 280 obtained before erection, but the decision to have I.M. Pei design a single, new, "eye-catching" entrance to the Louvre was made personally by François Mitterrand, with the enthusiastic cooperation of his effervescent Minister of Culture, Jack Lang, in the summer of 1983. When, six months later, the glass pyramid project was presented to the *Commission supérieure des monuments historiques*, responsible for the conservation and restoration of French buildings of historic worth, its startled members were given exactly three hours to debate the merits of this project, which had been cleverly sandwiched in among a score of other questions — among them one recommending the preservation of certain synagogues and churches, and another recommending the construction of a subterranean garage for cars and buses under the eastern end of the Tuileries Gardens. Since this latter proposal, which was intended to rid the immediate vicinity of the museum of the swarms of sightseeing buses ruining the splendid westward vista up the Tuileries Gardens, was welcomed by virtually every member of the historic monuments commission, it was later intimated through carefully planted "leaks" and an ingenious process of amalgam that the commission had approved *all* of the Ministry of Culture's recommendations virtually unanimously — whereas in fact most of the members had shown themselves anything but enthusiastic

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over the idea of planting a glass pyramid smack in the middle of the Cour Napoléon. The project for the "Grand Louvre" having thus been "approved" by the responsible commission, it was transmitted on January 25, 1984, to the president of the Republic, who in early February gave it his "definitive accord."

This autocratic decision stirred up a hullabaloo, which raged on for more than a year. Supporters of the project went into dithyrambs over this "piece of Lalique crystal," this "visible tip of an iceberg," this "feather on top of a hat" which (unlike some unobtrusive Paris *métro* entrance) was to act as a "signal" to errant tourists, as they groped their way around the "Grand Louvre," looking for an entrance.

Finally yielding to the clamor for a full-scale model, the sponsors agreed in April 1985 to have a crane hoist four wires into position, to enable the critics to "judge for themselves." Impressed because he could see right through this deceptive exercise in not-so-solid geometry, Jacques Chirac cautiously declared that he was "not at all hostile to the realization of this pyramid." No wonder! A new round of parliamentary elections was due in a few months' time, and the conservative mayor of Paris knew that if he made a *faux pas* at this point and declared himself ferociously opposed to this avant-garde wonder, he would promptly be consigned by his socialist adversaries to the trash-heap of diehard reactionaries.

Less predictable than this implicit capitulation to the "wave of the future" was the *vox populi*. By this time the reading and listening masses of France had been thoroughly worked over by a clever propaganda campaign designed to prove that, as I.M. Pei had explained to the left-wing newspaper *Libération*, "The pyramid is in the tradition of Le Nôtre" — that is, of Louis XIV's great landscape gardener, who, having thoughtfully died a century or two before, could not possibly contradict this sweeping affirmation. According to a public-opinion survey undertaken at this time, 48 percent of those polled said they favored the pyramid, 34 percent were still opposed. Even more instructive were other revolutions: 85 percent of those interviewed did not know just what the Cour Napoléon consisted of, 50 percent had never heard of I.M. Pei's plans to build an alluring subterranean "forum" under the pyramid and in the middle of the square, and 50 percent had never visited the Louvre!

These findings, in my opinion, confirm the underlying validity of what Jean-François Revel, apropos of French intellectual fads, wrote in 1975: "The profound desire of the bourgeois public in societies of consumption is to be both flattered and fooled. Flattered, by having a minority-type, aristocratic culture reconstituted for its personal enjoyment in the midst of a class culture which deprives it of its elite status. Fooled because it agrees to accept this select, minority-type culture as a simulacrum, as a phantom substitute for the real thing . . . fooled too and by itself because this culture, presented as revolutionary and even 'proletarian,' is, as it knows perfectly well, simply a phase of worldly narcissism."

The fascinating thing about that 1985 poll is that it involved a majority of persons who had only a hazy idea of just what was involved, but who were nevertheless willing, on the basis of hearsay, to declare that in principle and *a priori* they were *for* the erection of an ultra-modern glass pyramid in the middle of the forecourt of the world's grandest neo-Renaissance palace. Where I disagree with Revel, who, of course, was analyzing a slightly different phenomenon — intellectual snobbery practiced by pseudo-intellectuals — is in thinking that those who are so easily satisfied with this kind of bogus avant-garde elitism and synthetic snobbery are fully aware that they are indulging in "worldly narcissism." Are they not, even more subconsciously, the unwitting victims of surrealist confusion? With the tubular, Léger-type monster of the "Centre Beauborg" having paved the way, what could seem more "normal" than to plant a pyramid in the middle of the Louvre, in the manner, say, of Giorgio di Chirico? In a world already saturated by an incessant stream of mixed-up metaphors, it was doubtless inevitable that good taste and common sense should succumb to the oh-so-fashionable, kaleidoscopic confusion of our times.

Curtis Cate is a historian and biographer living in Paris.

Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

Editing the South, Part 2

◆

Last fall Howell Raines griped amusingly in *The New York Times Book Review* about "the *Southern Living* disease," an affliction that leads Southerners to depict their region "as one endless festival of barbecue, boiled shrimp, football Saturdays, and good old Nashville music." The three million of us who subscribe to that "relentlessly cheerful" house-and-garden magazine (Raines's words, and he's right about that) will recognize, however, that the man doesn't know what he's talking about. *Southern Living* does indeed offer recipes for tailgate parties, but its shrimp are usually tarted up with some fancy sauce, Nashville music seems to be *infra dig*, and as for barbecue — well, let me tell a story.

If you ask me, one of the best pieces *Southern Living* ever ran was an article by Gary Ford on barbecue. When I said as much to a *Southern Living* staffer, though, he grinned. "You know, Emory [Cunningham, the founding publisher] really didn't like that piece," he said. "He almost killed it."

I asked why on earth he'd want to do that.

"Too down-home. Too low-rent."

The point is that although Raines claims that "always with the South, things circle back around to race and class," he is strangely tone-deaf when it comes to the social pitch of *Southern Living*. This is one *genteel* magazine.

But take Raines's description of the *Southern Living* disease, give the blues equal billing with country music, add a dash of cultural anthropology and a touch of political reportage, remove the contemptuous tone, and I'd buy it as a description of a magazine called, simply, *Southern*. *Southern* first appeared, out of Little Rock, some three years ago. It, too, was written and edited for a Southern middle-class audience, but for one that was interested in more than portraits of itself.

While it lasted, in fact, *Southern* epitomized a novel idea of what the South is all about, one that since the 1970's has been struggling for the

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region's soul with the traditional, "Old South" view that I wrote about last month. In the crucial matter of race, for instance, *Southern* worked conscientiously to portray and to celebrate a biracial society — definitely *not* a color-blind one, rather one that both blacks and whites have built and must share. It sought black writers (successfully) and subscribers (I don't know), and it was surprisingly candid about the South's remaining and emerging problems of race relations.

Apparently I wasn't the only one who found *Southern*'s approach interesting. By last year the magazine had attracted over 200,000 paying customers for its version of "the South, the whole South, and nothing but the South." But like the man in the country song, *Southern* lived fast and died young, leaving only beautiful memories.

In the winter of 1988-89 I heard rumors out of Birmingham that the publishers of *Southern Living* were preparing to start a general-interest magazine of their own, to go head to head with *Southern*. They coveted *Southern*'s audience. Compared to *Southern Living* it drew proportionately more young readers and more men, and some advertisers like that. Moreover, *Southern*'s circulation was growing rapidly; *Southern Living* had pretty well saturated its market: three million households are, after all, a substantial fraction of the Southern middle class.

I was happy to hear these rumors — the more regional magazines the better — and unhappy to learn in March 1989 that they were wrong. *Southern Living* didn't start a competing magazine; it just bought out the 70 percent interest in *Southern* held by a Little Rock investment banking firm. The new owners of *Southern* promptly sacked its publisher, editor, and staff, and moved its editorial offices to Atlanta. Last summer they announced that *Southern* was being killed, to be replaced by something called *Southpoint* ("The Metropolitan Monthly").

Well, the move to Atlanta should have been a warning. Any magazine edited from there would have to be very different from the old *Southern* magazine. As an executive of *Atlanta* magazine told the Cox News Service: "The South that is Atlanta, the South that is Florida, bears little resemblance to the South that is Little Rock." This statement — meant as a criticism of Little Rock — is the kind of thing that makes Atlanta despised elsewhere in the South (except maybe in Florida). It is true, though, if only because there's some question of how many white folks in Atlanta are Southerners to start with. This same yuppie argued that *Southern* "had this real outdated romanticism about the South" — well, *Southpoint*'s promotional literature made it clear there'd be no romance about this new magazine. It wasn't going to struggle for the South's soul: it was looking to *sell* it.

Speaking of souls, have you heard the one about Satan's offer of wealth, power, and fame in exchange for a lawyer's? "What's the catch?" the man asks.

Just the sort of subscriber *Southpoint* seemed to be seeking. (A sample cover advertised an article on the ten best lawyers in the South. No kidding.) This magazine, its promotional mailing threatened, would be one that "demands your attention." It would offer "a probing, candid look at the region's big changes, new players, shifting currents." It would have "more about the hot issues directly affecting your career," as well as "revealing close-ups of the coolest players and fastest comers who shape today's South, the big winners (and losers)." I found myself wondering what the lukewarm outcome might be when a cool player meets a hot issue.

Anyway, the flyer said that someone like me, "who works, lives and plays (to win!) in today's South," has "the greatest need for a magazine like *Southpoint*, written for and about the 'thought' leaders who drive our fast-moving, quick-changing region." Now, it seems to me that if parts of the South have become "fast-moving" and "quick-changing" the least we can do is preserve a decent silence about it. And who wants to live in a "driven" region, much less one driven by "'thought' leaders"?

In short, this new magazine was not promising. One contrast sums it up nicely: where *Southern* had articles on barbecue and biscuits, *Southpoint*'s brochure promised a story on good airport food.

This is just embarrassing. Yankees do this stuff so much better, I say let them do it all.

To be fair, when *Southpoint* actually appeared, in September, it was better than this mailing had led me to fear. An enlightening cover story put the financial affairs of Southern college football coaches under the lens. There was a pleasant article about Olive Ann Burns, author of *Cold Sassy Tree*, and a promising column on urban planning. All of the material I liked could have appeared in the old *Southern*, though, and the rest of *Southpoint* is either boring or silly. There are real sundowners of articles about banks and business and "cool players," as promised. The sort of flagrant advertising tie-in that has made *Southern Living* so much money is represented by an article on a bunch of expensive hotels (the "five best" are in New Orleans, Dallas, Houston, Miami, and — Washington, DC!) There's a poorly researched list of bookstores in a number of Southern cities, and a similar list of Oriental restaurants that I can't judge. And there is absolutely no whimsy about this new magazine.

What we have here is a combination of *Fortune* and *New York* magazine in a Southern setting, a magazine for people who work, live, and play (to win!) in Southern cities — not at all the same thing as a magazine for Southerners. If *Southpoint* survives for a year or two in its present format, I'll be curious to see how many of its readers are migrants to the South and how many are natives. I'm not sure what to predict, though: will many migrants care about a *Southern* magazine? Will many natives care about *this* one?

Frankly, I believe that the *Southern Living* folks have made a big mistake with *Southpoint*, and that it reflects a generation gap of some consequence. I'll finish this discussion next month.

John Shelton Reed enjoys Southern Living *and Southern living in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.*

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LAW

JEANNE BERG

Taking Leave of Our Census

by Mark Krikorian

Illegal aliens will be counted in the 1990 census — that's right, illegal aliens. As a result, one or more states with a disproportionately large number of illegal residents will gain seats in the House of Representatives at the expense of states with few illegal immigrants. According to calculations by the Congressional Research Service, the inclusion of illegals in the 1980 census caused Georgia and Indiana each to lose one seat to California and Texas. During the next reapportionment of seats in Congress, one or more of the following states are expected to lose representation because of their relative lack of illegal aliens — Pennsylvania, North Carolina, West Virginia, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Kansas, Michigan, and Georgia.

This *de facto* inclusion of illegal aliens in the political community distorts our system of government in the same way as the counting of slaves, even ⅗ of them, did before the Civil War. Since illegals almost never vote, an individual citizen in California gets more Congressmen for his vote, as it were, than a citizen in Indiana. Congressional districts with large numbers of illegal aliens are therefore similar to the old "rotten boroughs" of England, where a handful of people were able to elect a member to Parliament who had the same authority as a member elected by thousands of voters. And since a state's electoral votes are based on the number of seats it has in the House of Representatives, the inclusion of illegal aliens in the census distorts even the presidential election, potentially changing the outcome in a close race.

To rectify this, Congressman Thomas Ridge (R-PA) sought in October to amend the bill appropriating funds for the Department of Commerce (which oversees the Census Bureau) to require that illegal aliens not be counted in the census for purposes of congressional apportionment. This was the same amendment introduced by Senator Richard Shelby (D-AL) and included by the Senate in its own version of the funding bill. However, Attorney General Thornburg and Secretary of Commerce Mosbacher said they would recommend that the President veto the bill, which also funded the Justice and State Departments and the entire federal judiciary, if it included the provision on illegal aliens. The provision was defeated on a procedural vote by 232 to 184.

This was probably the last in a series of legislative and judicial efforts to stop the counting of illegal aliens in the upcoming census. In 1988, 42 Congressmen (led by Mr. Ridge), three state governments, and two nonprofit groups sued the Census Bureau in Federal Court to stop the counting of illegal immigrants in the upcoming census. This suit, like a similar one filed in 1980, was dismissed on technical grounds. Three bills filed during this Congress in the House of Representatives fared no better, having died in committee because the Democratic leadership had no intention of letting House members vote on the substance of this issue.

Advocates of the inclusion of illegal aliens in the census came forth with some interesting rationales during the House debate on Mr. Ridge's amendment: Congressman Pelosi of California said, "To deny these people [illegals] representation — people who often embody the most powerless elements of our society — is to deny them justice." Lamar Smith of Texas, ranking Republican on the House immigration subcommittee, said the inclusion of illegals in the census reflects "the wisdom of the framers of the Constitution." And Connie Morella of Maryland shuddered, "What a chilling effect to ask whether one is illegal or legal, what a chilling effect to have our numerators become INS [immigration] agents."

A number of more serious arguments have also been made for counting illegals. The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution requires that seats in the House of Representatives be apportioned "counting the whole number of persons in each state." The very people who see "emanations" and "penumbras" throughout the Constitution have, on this issue, become literalists. They maintain that the plain meaning of the words shows that it is unconstitutional to exclude anyone from the census count. Yet the Census Bureau counts only people whose "usual residence" is in the US, including illegal aliens, but excluding foreign visitors and some diplomats. These excluded people are obviously "in" the country, but are not counted, while servicemen who live abroad *will* be counted, and no one seems to mind.

The Census Bureau opposes the exclusion of illegals for more mundane reasons. It maintains there is no practical way to distinguish between legal and illegal residents, and that any attempt to do so would make its population figures less reliable. The Census Bureau also points out, with some justification, that it is a little late to change the rules for the 1990 census — 170 million forms have already been printed up, to be mailed in March, and thousands of temporary workers have been trained as interview-

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ers. Those in Congress who want illegals counted have used this time constraint to their advantage—they have refused to consider any move to exclude illegals until the year of the count, when they can claim it's too late to change anything.

While it is virtually assured that illegal aliens will be counted in this year's census, one thing is still uncertain. During the head count in 1980, Jimmy Carter's Justice Department forbade immigration service raids against illegal aliens *so as not to scare them away*. According to the order sent by the Justice Department to immigration service offices in 1980, the ban on sweeps for illegal aliens was intended to foster "an atmosphere conducive to [obtaining] complete participation and disclosure of information" for the census.

Gene McNary, new commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, said during his Senate confirmation hearing in October that he would consider a similar moratorium on illegal alien searches in 1990, but that he would not stop enforcing the immigration laws. That will be some feat. When asked by this writer whether the attorney general would impose a ban on immigration law enforcement for the census, one of his spokesmen suggested asking the Immigration Service. A spokesman at the Immigration Service, in turn, said to call the attorney general's office. Despite the evasiveness, however, the feeling in the administration and Congress seems to be that there will be no suspension of raids against illegal aliens for this census. We have to be thankful for small favors.

Mark Krikorian is a freelance writer living in Washington, DC.

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JEANNE BERG

Between Tyranny and Chaos

by Roger Davidson and Nicholas Davidson

An Appraisal of 20th-Century Music

Why does serious 20th-century music attract so few listeners? This unpopularity is not due to a lack of interest in serious music itself, since classical music is a formidable industry that regularly draws vast numbers of listeners worldwide. These people flock to listen to the works of an earlier era, however—music of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Why should a public that obviously loves music be so consistently repelled by the music of its own time?

A popular explanation is that people are lazy or uninformed. If they would only take the time and trouble to understand contemporary music better, they would soon be able to enjoy it. A close examination of contemporary music does not support this excuse. The problems begin with our composers, not our audience, as will be clear from the examples below, which are taken from some of the most acclaimed composers of the 20th century.

* * *

One of the principal characteristics of 20th-century music is an increasing mechanicalism in both its creation and performance. The first step in this direction was the invention of the twelve-tone or "serial" technique of composition by Arnold Schoenberg in the 1920's. In this system, the composer chooses a row or "series" of the twelve notes of the scale, and writes his entire piece made up of various permutations of this series.

This system has an inherent lack of freedom and promotes mathematical thinking on the part of the composer, since he must think in terms of permutations of a fixed series rather than of the natural flow of music. Because of the restrictions on melody and harmony, there is a strong tendency for the composer to be constricted in rhythm as well.

A further difference in contemporary music is that today's composers characteristically write down every detail of the performance, leaving nothing to the discretion of the performer. Accents, time values, and tempi are specified with a completeness that leaves virtually no scope for interpretation. Even traditional notations of time, such as quarter notes and whole notes, may be replaced with the precise number of seconds a note is to be held.

This eagerness on the part of the composer to exercise total control over his music may seem to be justified on grounds on interpretative accuracy. There is, however, no way to assimilate a score in which every detail is notated or is indicated in words. If the composer's attitude is one of absolute control, the music itself will always feel heartless. It will fail to move the players, and therefore the listeners, in any real way.

A typical example can be drawn from "Bicinium," a work for two oboes by Charles Wuorinen. The second oboe part starts in 5/32 time, with a single note sustained throughout the measure. Suddenly, the next measure switches to 4/16 time—a difficult shift. Then, instead of having four actual sixteenth notes or multiples thereof in the measure, there are five sixteenths in as a quintuplet, divided as follows: two thirty-seconds, one sixteenth, two thirty-seconds, a triplet of three thirty-seconds (which fits into one-sixteenth), and two thirty-seconds. If this sounds difficult, that's because it is. In the third measure, the meter switches to 1/32. The next measure switches to 2/4 time, a much slower tactus. Coming directly after the previous measures, it is very difficult to react to accurately, especially

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since the notes in this measure are also much slower: eighth note, quarter note, eighth note. The last measure in this line is in 3/16 time, again a difficult shift.

For that triplet in the second measure, the musician must feel that this measure is made up of four beats of one-sixteenth each. He must space the quintuplet of five notes evenly over these four beats. To play the triplet, the fourth beat of the quintuplet must be felt as divided into three equal parts.

The point is not that today's musicians cannot play this accurately, but simply that there is no way a human being can do all this division and subdivision and still maintain a musical pulse. When a musician is required to concentrate so hard on rhythmic mechanics, there is virtually no chance of his playing with a natural sense of phrasing.

A more subtle form of overnotation is to replace the intuitive and somewhat flexible traditional time markings with time values calibrated in seconds or fractions of seconds. An example of this is "charisma," a piece for clarinet and cello by Iannis Xenakis. Throughout this piece, the tempo is indicated exclusively in seconds rather than in the traditional beats-per-minute. The musician must respond to the number indicated next to the note, which tells him how many seconds the note must be held. The musician naturally responds to a note as if it were in the context of a particular tempo. But if he must simultaneously respond to a *number*, he is forced to flip to a completely different part of his brain, while still retaining some semblance of musicality. This is a form of mental torture, especially if the process continues throughout the piece, as in this case.

It is true that the composer has indicated "approximately 5 seconds" or "approximately 1/2 second," etc. This apparent flexibility, however, is deceptive, for the musician still has to concentrate on counting seconds. In effect, the composer has written a piece with no actual tempo. If there is no tempo there is no rhythm, and where there is no rhythm there is no music.

Seemingly at the other extreme from overnotation—and often found within the same piece—is so-called "aleatoric" music. The word "aleatoric" derives from the Latin *alea*, a game of dice. In aleatoric music, particular passages, or even whole sections, are improvised. A typical instruction is to "Play A, B flat and E flat freely over and over again for twenty seconds."

Oddly enough, aleatoric directions are often constricting, not liberating. The performer feels limited by the fact that he is still trying to play within the composer's mindset. In addition, he is often required to improvise for a specified length of time—in the illustrated example, for 60 seconds. He must improvise and count both at once. When a musician is asked to play an aleatoric passage, he has neither the freedom to play according to his intuitions, nor enough guidance from the composer to improvise as musically as possible. In effect, aleatoric music gives the musician a double message, since it requires him to improvise in a context that by its nature is not improvisatory. This tends to drive musicians crazy.

The spirit of a piece is always visible in the appearance of the score, and the scores of many modern pieces resemble tangles of barbed wire. One looks for phrases without result. (In modern music even rests do not necessarily indicate true breathing points. Today, silence is often used not to balance sound, or for peacefulness, but rather for shock value—equivalent to the pause in an artillery barrage between the impact of one shell and the next.)

Some scores use "graphic" notation. Graphic notation consists of pictures intended to cause musical reactions when the musician looks at them. Composers who adopt such approximate graphic indications of what their music is to sound like have leaped ideologically into the fallacy that music can consist solely of a series of doodles, textures, outbursts, stops, and starts. Never mind how artfully arranged, this amounts to adopting the attitude that your score can be used by anyone, to express any idea, in any context. Although performances of graphic music are quite rare, it represents a major and perhaps growing part of contemporary composers' output.

Modern music is suffering, then,

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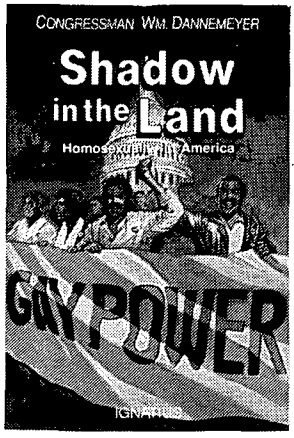

In this eye-opening study, California Congressman William Dannemeyer provides a comprehensive overview of the militant homosexual movement in the U.S.—its historical evolution, its social and political aims, and the ground it has already won in these areas. Dannemeyer explains how the "Gay rights" activists have gained enormous power and influence in the courts, the political arena and the media, and how organizations such as the A.C.L.U., N.O.W. and other sympathetic political action groups are attempting to establish "rights" never before known—such as the "right" of homosexuals to marry, adopt children, teach young people how to perform homosexual acts as part of sex education programs, etc. He considers the implications of the homosexual agenda and its potentially disastrous results for society.

"Congressman Dannemeyer is fearless and unintimidated, and so is his book. This work deserves a wide audience." **— U.S. Congressman Henry Hyde**

"Few people understand the threat to the family and to the nation that unrepentant homosexuals pose as does Congressman Dannemeyer. This book is must reading for everyone who seeks the truth." **— Cal Thomas,** Los Angeles Times Syndicate

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from the extremes of tyranny and chaos, rationalism and irrationalism—two sides of the same coin. Rather than expanding musical possibilities, most new notation is actually inhibiting, and what is being inhibited is music. At the extreme of rationalism, composer Earle Brown has defended serial music on the grounds that it is the technique "most rationally compatible with and relevant to many methods of analysis and synthesis employed by mathematics and the physical sciences today." (He does not explain why art should imitate science.)

At the same time, Brown admits that the early serialist slogan, "total organization," is now embarrassing. To right the balance, he feels, serialist composers must add an element of "the uncontrollable." This point of view is manifested very clearly in his compositions, where serial and aleatoric passages alternate. Nevertheless, the radical contradiction between these points of view persists; he seeks to "balance" rather than to integrate them, in the hope of producing "creative insecurity." Thus, the contradiction between these two points of view, rather than providing a stimulus toward their reintegration and the consequent rehumanization of music, is prized for its own sake. To rationalize this contradiction without resolving it, Brown concludes, "We can serialize, generalize, mobilize, do anything now . . . without needing to be *right*." For the sophisticated composer, then, anything is acceptable as long as it is not universal, absolute, or timeless.

T. MYCEK

Taking this still further, other composers espouse pure irrationalism. They view their primary mission as to depict disorder, confusion, fear, and above all, meaninglessness: a lawless universe, lacking fixed points of reference. Such a viewpoint can be described as "disintegrationism," but it is part of the myth of progress that has all but gutted most of the arts in this century.

Roger Davidson is a composer. His brother, Nicholas Davidson, is a writer. Both live in New York City.

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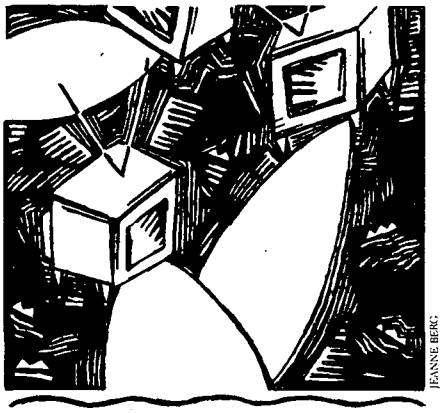

JEANNE BERG

The Uses and Abuses of Public Opinion Polls

by Jon A. Krosnick

The Case of Louis Harris and Associates

The most important principle underlying democracy is that the majority should rule. But until relatively recently, Americans have been poorly equipped to communicate their wishes to elected representatives. The principal means for doing so has always been elections. But elections occur relatively infrequently, and they provide no means for citizens to indicate precisely which of a winning candidate's stands they like and which they dislike. Especially passionate individuals have always expressed their views directly to their representatives, but these people convey the wishes of only a small segment of constituents.

The development of widespread national public opinion polling in the 1940's was therefore a major step forward for the citizens of the United States. Opinion surveys have made it possible for the electorate to express detailed demands on policy matters to elected representatives in Washington. And when national crises occur, we can swiftly send pointed messages to politicians about what we want done. As a result, public opinion polls are tremendously valuable assets in the conduct of contemporary American democracy.

But as valuable as public opinion polls are, they are also easily misinterpreted. Public sentiment on most controversial issues is highly textured and conflicted. It is therefore difficult to describe the American electorate's views on issues simply in terms of the proportions of people who favor and oppose a broad public policy such as legalized abortion. As is true for many issues, public opinion on abortion varies depending upon many details, including who the mother is, what the circumstances of the pregnancy are, and who would pay for and perform it.

Because public opinion is often so sensitive to detail, a slight change in the way a survey question is asked can sometimes greatly alter people's answers. For example, consider the following question:

> Which of these do you think is the main cause now holding back greater prosperity in this country: (a) Business Leaders, (b) The New Deal, or (c) Labor?

In a survey conducted in the early 1940's, "Business Leaders" were selected as the chief obstruction to prosperity. However, when the third response choice in the question was reworded to read "Labor Unions" in a simultaneous survey of a comparable sample of respondents, answers changed significantly. In this case, "Labor Unions" were selected as the most important obstruction. Apparently, people's beliefs about labor in general were different from their beliefs about labor unions in particular.

Pollsters have learned an important lesson from this example and many others like it: whenever the results of a survey are reported, the exact wording of the questions should be reported as well. Even slightly rephrasing a question can sometimes seriously mislead readers about what respondents were asked. However, despite the fact that paraphrasing a question clearly compromises the honesty and accuracy of a poll report, doing so is not uncommon. The culprits are sometimes journalists, who change wordings to make articles read more smoothly. But in one recent case, the culprit was a survey firm that conducts many important polls: Louis Harris and Associates.

During September and October of 1986, Louis Harris and Associates con-

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ducted a national study of public attitudes toward the civil justice system and tort law reform. The survey was commissioned by Aetna Life and Casualty, an insurance company that is often involved in civil litigation and that favors changes in some regulations governing civil lawsuits. The poll's questions addressed topics ranging from citizens' perceptions of current problems with the civil justice system to citizens' attitudes toward proposed changes in the system.

Some results of this study were reported in an article in *The New York Times* on March 7, 1987. The survey was characterized as indicating that although the public was satisfied with some aspects of the civil justice system, it was dissatisfied with others and favored many reforms. Most importantly, spokesmen from Aetna, the Tort Reform Institute, and the Insurance Information Institute were quoted as saying that the poll demonstrates "broad public *support* for changes in the civil justice system" and that the poll's findings "reflected the public's *demand* for reform" (emphasis added). The findings of this survey were characterized similarly in a press release produced by Aetna and in the Harris report of the survey's findings.

These characterizations are misleading for two reasons. First, the questions actually asked respondents how *acceptable* they found each proposed change: very acceptable, somewhat acceptable, not too acceptable, or not at all acceptable. But instead of describing the percentages of respondents who found each proposed change "acceptable," *The New York Times* and the Aetna press release descriptions claimed to report the proportions of respondents who *favored, supported, agreed with,* or *would allow* each of them. Similarly, the Harris report offered conclusions about the number of Americans who *supported* and *favored* the changes.

The proportion of people who reported a proposed change to be acceptable might be different from the proportion who would have said they "favored," "supported," "agreed with," or "would allow it." The word "acceptable" seems to be a relatively mild word in comparison to "favor" or "support," so many more people may find a given proposed change acceptable than would favor or support it. Therefore, the use of these last terms may have led to the appearance of inappropriately high levels of public endorsement.

Perhaps even more questionable than this word substitution is the method used to calculate the proportions of people who supposedly "favored," "supported," "agreed with," or "would allow" each change. In all reports and summaries, this was done by combining the proportions of respondents who said they found each proposed change "very acceptable" or "somewhat acceptable." It seems clearly inappropriate to describe some legal changes as receiving "very strong support" when a large proportion of respondents actually said those changes were only "somewhat acceptable."

In order to explore whether using the words "favor" or "support" might have produced lower levels of apparent public endorsement of the proposed changes in the civil justice system, my students and I recently conducted a study in a regional telephone survey. Residents of the suburbs of Columbus, Ohio, were contacted by telephone. One-third of these people, selected randomly, were asked the nine questions in the Harris survey that asked "how acceptable" respondents found each proposed change to be. Another third of our respondents, again selected randomly, were asked instead whether they would "strongly favor," "somewhat favor," "favor a little," or "not favor at all" each proposed change. And the final third of respondents were asked whether they would "strongly support," "somewhat support," "support a little," or "not support at all" each proposed change.

The results of this experiment were in part consistent with our expectations and in part surprising. As expected, many more respondents said they found the proposed changes *acceptable* than said they *supported* them. Thus, "support" seems to be stronger than "find acceptable" in many people's minds. However, about the same proportion of respondents said they *favored* each proposed change as said they found it *acceptable*, so "favor" and "find acceptable" are apparently equally strong and can reasonably be substituted for one another.

This example of a misleading poll summary by Harris is not an isolated incident. For example, Harris conducted a 1981 survey of American parents that was sponsored by General Mills, Inc. The Harris report of the results said at one point:

> Many (over 7 in 10 family members) believe that "even when they don't work, parents today don't give their children the time and attention they need."

However, the figure of "7 in 10" is not actually the proportion of respondents who said they *believed* the statement. Instead, this is the proportion of people who "agreed strongly" or "agreed somewhat" with the statement. The Harris summary of answers to this question again seems to overstate public agreement with the statement.

Consider another example. On May 19, 1989, Louis Harris published an article opposite the editorial page in *The New York Times* describing the results of a survey his firm conducted for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. At one point, Harris said:

> More than 9 in 10 Americans would *support* special school programs for underclass children beginning at age 8. These classes would be designed to motivate the kids to stay in school and to convince them that they can extricate themselves from poverty. . . .

However, the survey question did not

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ask respondents whether they would support such programs. Instead, it asked whether respondents would "favor or oppose" such programs. Thus, Harris again probably overstated public support for these special school programs. Furthermore, Harris's paraphrasing of the question is very different from the description of the special programs that respondents actually heard:

> Starting special school programs with young underclass children when they are 8 years of age, designed to increase their motivation to stay in school and to arouse hope within them that they can lift themselves out of their miserable life situation. . . .

The last phrase of the question was reworded in Harris's summary in a way that changed its tone considerably.

Rephrasing questions and bunching together answer categories is not necessarily the rule in Harris's reports of their polls. Indeed, the majority of Harris reports I examined did accurately characterize what respondents were asked and what answers they gave. Furthermore, Harris routinely publishes the entire questionnaire from each of its surveys in the final report, along with complete statistical breakdowns of answers to each question, so any careful reader can directly examine the actual results of a Harris survey. Nonetheless, the cases described above illustrate some problems.

There are at least three possible explanations for Harris's overstatement. The first is simply carelessness accompanied by a motivation to make reports interesting and easy to read. The second is a desire to maximize the degree to which a poll appears to support the interests of the client who sponsored it. And the third is a political agenda.

I suspect instead, however, that the motivation for Harris's occasional misrepresentations is none of these but rather a fourth possibility: the desire to make opinion poll results seem more important and compelling than they sometimes are. Most social and political issues are the subjects of lengthy and vociferous debates precisely because there are sharp disagreements among people about how to resolve them—as with abortion and gun control, and in fact for most big issues. But to report that the public is deadlocked in disagreement on an important issue is hardly newsworthy. Therefore Harris may exaggerate the extent of agreement in the American public on controversial issues in order to enhance the apparent strength of the public's will and thereby increase the apparent significance of his findings.

Public opinion polls are clearly tremendously valuable in helping the American public keep its government in check when a majority of citizens agree on how an issue should be handled. But unless reports of surveys accurately describe their findings, the American public and our elected representatives can hardly be expected to take these surveys seriously. Making poll results more credible is an important goal for both survey researchers and journalists.

Jon A. Krosnick is an assistant professor of psychology and political science at Ohio State.

STAGE

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The Economics of the New York Theater

by Mari Cronin

The cost of producing on Broadway has risen sharply, particularly in the last ten to fifteen years, and this has taken its toll on American productions. Inflation, higher priced labor and materials, theatrical union wage increases, featherbedding, and the enormous cost of advertising—a full page ad in *The New York Times* is upwards of $10,000, and the *Times*' daily alphabetical listings of shows must be paid for by producers—all are partly responsible for soaring production costs and ticket prices. These increased expenses have in turn forced a shift in who produces plays and musicals, changing the face of Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional theater.

It costs nearly as much to produce a revival of a musical in a not-for-profit Off-Broadway theater in New York today as it did to produce one *on* Broadway ten years ago. Take, for instance, *Sweeney Todd*. Last spring the nonprofit York Theatre, an Off-Off-Broadway company housed in a church gym, mounted a highly-acclaimed environmental restaging of the Stephen Sondheim-Hugh Wheeler musical about a murderous barber whose accomplice, Mrs. Lovett, bakes his victims into pies. The York's production, using only eight principal actors, five chorus members, and three synthesizers, was budgeted at $55,000. Fifteen thousand dollars of that was made up in ticket sales, and the other $40,000 came from corporate and individual sponsors. Under Equity showcase rules the designers, staff, and actors received an honorarium that amounted, essentially, to carfare.

The Circle in the Square's transfer of the York company's *Sweeney Todd* to their 681-seat uptown theater, with the same number of cast members and musicians, cost $600,000. Ten years ago on Broadway the show was capitalized at $900,000—only a third more than The Circle in the Square budget—and cost $1.2 million to open. Today a full-scale revival of the show at a large Broadway theater would run $4 or $5 million.

Costs have escalated to such an extent that nowadays a year of standing-room-only and eight-figure grosses do not insure that a production, especially a musical, will recoup its investment and show a profit. Andrew Lloyd Webber's $8-million *Phantom of the Opera* took 65 weeks at capacity to return its capital. And the $7-million revue *Jerome Robbins Broadway*, which had an unprecedented six-month reconstruction period and 22 weeks of rehearsals, was expected to take 63 weeks to make back its invest-

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ment—if it played to capacity (it hasn't).

The change in musical theater from an emphasis on music, lyrics, and story to an emphasis on spectacle has added an additional $1-$2 million to already overexpensive production budgets. The falling chandelier and floating candelabra in *Phantom of the Opera*, or the special ramps and tracks for roller skaters dressed as trains in *Starlight Express* require hundreds of thousands of dollars to build and maintain. More troublesome, perhaps, than the expense is audiences' addiction to these spectacles. They want to see every dollar of an eight-million-dollar budget on stage for their $55 or $60 ticket, and so producers are beginning to demand special effects where there is no need for them.

The theater has long been a chancy investment. Today with costs so high and returns more elusive than ever, it is becoming increasingly difficult to recoup. The increased recoupment period, and the combination of theater owners and conglomerates that have now become Broadway's producers, have driven the independent producer and the small investor out. One unit in a $6- or $7-million production can cost $120,000—too much for the small investor, and too little for a producer, for whom too many small units would be needed to make up such a budget.

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The high cost of producing on Broadway is stultifying it in other ways. The musical theater needs new blood—Sondheim, Jerry Herman, Cy Coleman, and Sheldon Harnick are all in their 50's or 60's. But at several million dollars a production Broadway producers won't take a chance on untried talent. Workshops and readings have replaced productions as virtually the only way for younger people to see their work on stage. Often today's musical theater writers are well into their 30's or even 40's before their first show is produced. By contrast, Harold Prince has pointed out that he and Sondheim did all of their experimenting on Broadway. Today, he says, it would be impossible, even for men of their stature, to raise the money for any project whose popularity could not be guaranteed.

Nor is this paralysis affecting only musicals. The multi-million dollar price tag has also driven serious theater from Broadway. Fewer and fewer plays are produced on Broadway, and with few exceptions (notably, *M. Butterfly* and most of Neil Simon's shows), those that are come from London, Off-Broadway, or regional theater.

Yet New York does not lack dramas. Plays that would once have been produced on Broadway are now being produced by Off- and Off-Off-Broadway theater companies and commercial producers: productions such as *The Cocktail Hour*, A.R. Gurney's play about the dynamics of an upper-middle-class WASP family in Buffalo; *The Night Hank Williams Died*, Larry L. King's drama about the hopes and dreams of a young man in a dusty Texas town in 1952; *Only Kidding*, Jim Geoghan's study of comedians; and Jerry Steiner's *Other People's Money*, which concerns the struggle to take over a New England manufacturing firm. Last season there were so many more good plays produced Off-Broadway than on that the Dramatists Guild, the organization of playwrights, composers, and lyricists, lobbied seriously for the inclusion of Off-Broadway in the annual Tony Awards. (As has happened in the past, the majority of Broadway theater owners, producers, and union executives vetoed the idea. The Tony Awards mean big business: an award-winning play and musical immediately registers increases at the box office, sometimes enough to keep a production running another year, as was the case with the 1985 musical *Big River*, and those theater owners and union executives want the option of being able to move popular attractions to Broadway to reap the larger financial rewards.)

New York has now reached the point that some producers are avoiding Broadway. The producers of *Other People's Money*, Susan Quint Gallin and Jeffrey Ash, turned down an offer from Donald Trump to finance a move to Broadway. If, Ash says, they sell 400 tickets at their present theater (Minetta Lane) they are sold out; if they were to sell 600 tickets on Broadway they'd be only half-full. Though the show has been popular, especially with the Wall Street crowd, a move to Broadway does not seem to the producers to make good financial sense.

Having taken over Broadway's role as the source of new plays and musicals, Off-Broadway and the regional theaters now find themselves aligning more closely with Broadway. They have increasingly become Broadway's tryout spots, some even receiving "enhancement" money from Broadway producers for certain productions. Neil Simon's new play, *Jake's Women*, will have its world premiere at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre this month. David Hare's *The Secret Rapture*, though it originally was set to premiere on Broadway, was tried out first at Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival. *The Piano Lesson*, August Wilson's latest and due on Broadway in the spring, began at the Yale Repertory Theatre, was presented by the Seattle Rep, and will play several more cities before arriving in New York. Clearly, the commercial and not-for-profit theater is starting to merge. This means, for better and worse, that the center of American theater has moved off of Broadway and to a substantial extent even out of New York—better, in that places like the Milwaukee Rep and Actor's Theatre of Louisville are originating interesting plays; worse, in that Broadway's problems are often finding their way back to places like Louisville: the influence works both ways.

Mari Cronin is a literary agent in New York City.

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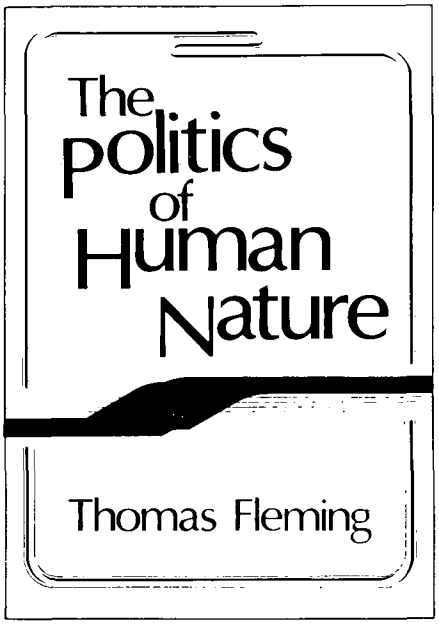

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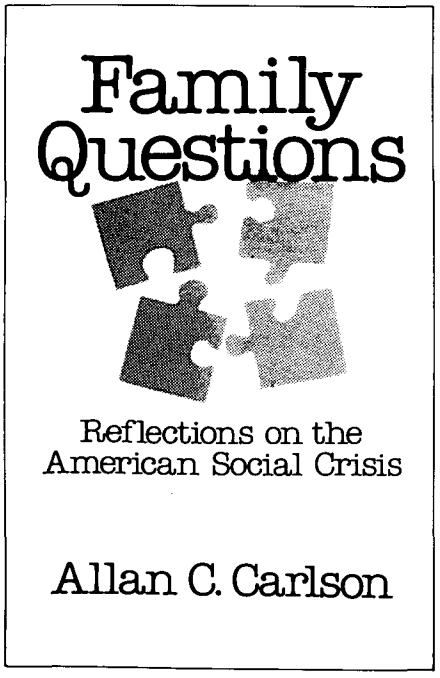

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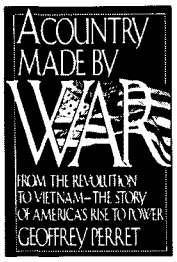

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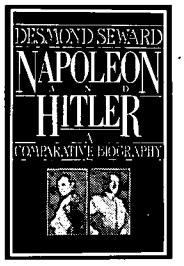

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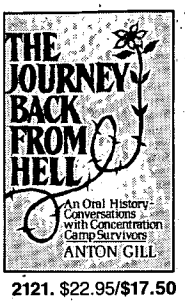

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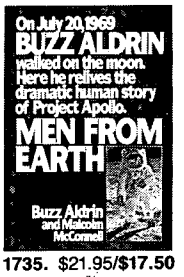
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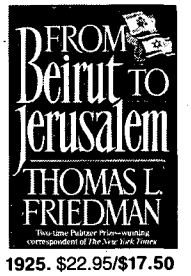

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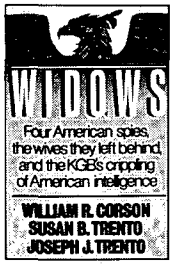
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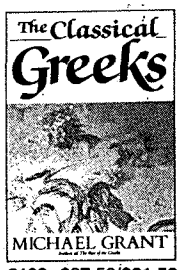

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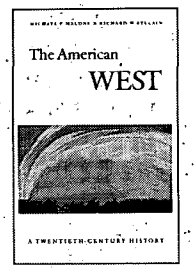

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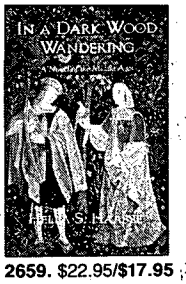

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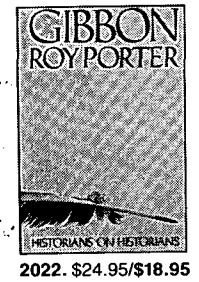

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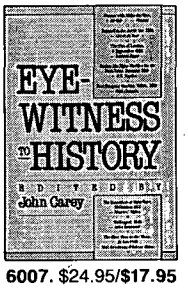

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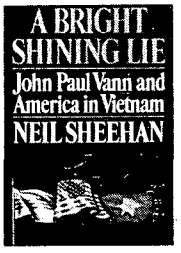

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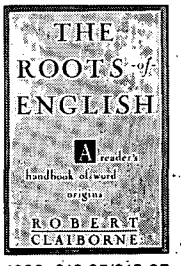

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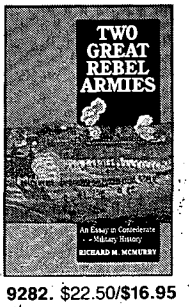

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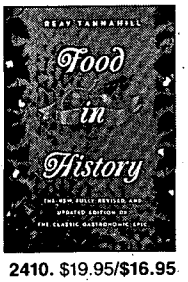

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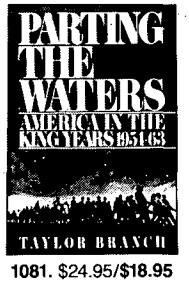

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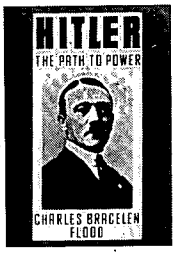

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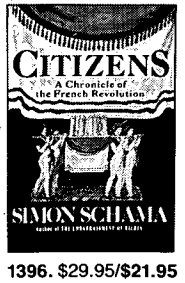

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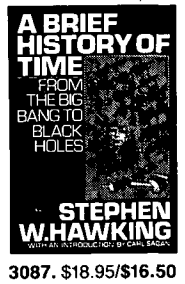

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